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THE PRETHER Evangelist

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A New Leaf

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

*He came to my desk with quivering lip—
The lesson was done.
“Dear Teacher, I want a new leaf,” he said,
“I have spoiled this one.”
I took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave him a new one, all unspotted,
And into his sad eyes smiled:
“Do better now, my child!”*

*I went to the Throne with a quivering soul—
The old year was done.
“Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?
“I have spoiled this one.”
He took the old leaf, stained and blotted,
And gave me a new one, all unspotted,
And into my sad heart smiled:
“Do better now, my child!”*

Author unknown

I AM ENOUGH of an optimist to still get a little excited about the New Year. The thought of having a “new leaf,” “all unspotted” on which to write, still gives me a sense of exhilaration. Even though I know that this “new leaf” will, likewise, soon be “stained and blotted,” I nevertheless have hope that each New Year will be better than the one before.

I am enough of a realist, however, to know that the New Year often isn't better than the old year. Sometimes my new leaf gets stained and blotted even faster than the previous one. What I have learned over the years, however, is that if I want the New Year to be better, then I need to do something about making it so.

This involves two processes, reflecting on the old and planning for the new.

Reflecting on the old

It has often been said that those who refuse to learn from the mistakes of the past are destined to repeat them. While we usually think

about this in terms of world events and national policy, this is true in our own lives as well. If we don't review our past, look over where we went wrong, and take steps to make changes, we will repeat our mistakes.

As Christians, a part of this process of reviewing the past includes confessing our failures before the Lord, repenting of them, and seeking and accepting His forgive-

ness. We are reminded of those blessed words of assurance in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (NIV).

Having reviewed the past, having learned its lessons, and having confessed past failures, we must not, however, continue to brood over old mistakes. Rather, in the words of the Apostle Paul, “Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, [let us] press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14, NIV). We need to press on toward what is ahead. And that leads to the second part of the process.

Planning for the new

While most of us laugh about making New Year's resolutions (even Pontius pokes a little fun at them on the next page), there *is* value in setting goals. We have often heard it said that those who aim at nothing usually hit it. So while we may not reach all the heights to which

we aspire in our New Year's resolutions, we may at least do better than if we had made no resolutions at all. I have made a lot of resolutions over the years that I have never kept. But I've also made some that I *have kept*, and just these few have made a significant difference in my life.

Such resolutions need to be realistic. One reason we fail to keep our New Year's resolutions is because we set our sights too high. We set high goals and approach them with great zeal. But when we find that we cannot attain these goals, we give up in discouragement.

So set realistic goals. The person, for example who has never had a regular prayer time might do well to plan on five minutes a day rather than 15 to begin with. Or the couch potato who resolves to start exercising might want to begin with a goal of walking 15 minutes three times a week, then work up from there.

Seek God's help

Another reason we fail to keep our resolutions is because we seek to keep them in our own strength. While resolves to change, to do better, must be rooted in strong acts of our will (and not just superficial desires to do better), we need God's power to bolster our wills.

Two means that God uses to strengthen us are His word and our prayers. Therefore, one of the most valuable resolutions we can make to begin a new year is to read the Bible regularly and to spend some time each day in private prayer. Or if we are already doing these two things, we can resolve to be more diligent about them. As we are faithful in these, we will receive God's power to make changes in other areas of our lives.

And finally, don't give up. One of the biggest reasons we do not keep our New Year's resolutions is because we give up after a few failures. But to go back to the Apostle Paul's words, we need to keep on pressing on. It may be that we will need to readjust our expectations, to set our sights a little lower. But we dare not give up. Any goal worth achieving is going to take committed effort over the long haul. [†]

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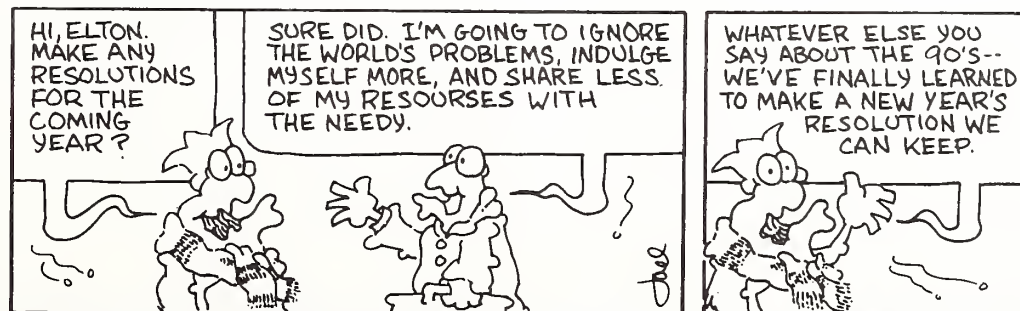
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Pontius' Puddle





It's Time for Spiritual Awakening

The first of four articles on The Brethren Church's "Priorities for the Nineties."

By Ronald W. Waters

itual awakening: "When the Father wakes us up to see Christ's fullness in new ways, so that together we trust Him, love Him, and obey Him in new ways, so that we move with Him in new ways for the fulfillment of His global cause."*

A Deepening Relationship With the Lord

Spiritual awakening begins with a "wake-up call" from God to believers. Often we get so caught up in daily living that we lose sight of God's agenda for the world. At times, we neglect our relationship with Him. The messages to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 are an example of His call to us to spiritual awakening, repentance, and renewal.

God's "wake-up call" is that we "see the fullness of Christ in new ways." In Philippians 3:10 the Apostle Paul describes his life purpose: "to know Christ." This is more than a casual acquaintance with Him. "To know" includes a deep experience of the other, as in the intimacy of marriage.

What is "the fullness of Christ"? Paul says that "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Jesus], and through him to reconcile to himself all things . . . by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:19-20). Jesus Himself said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). To know Christ is to know God in all His fullness.

In this life, we will never fully

**Concerts of Prayer* by David Bryant (copyright © 1984, 1988 by Regal Books, Ventura, Calif.; used by permission), p. 40. Several concepts explored here are taken from Chapter 4, "Beyond the Threshold: The Hope Toward Which We Pray," based on this definition.

comprehend the "fullness of Christ." But to make our life purpose "to know Christ" in all His fullness will open our minds and hearts to a growing intimacy with Him.

A Life-Long Maturing Process

I made my profession of faith at age nine (during a revival service!). I still remember the joy and peace I felt that night. Three years later, I wondered if I had really known what I was doing when I made that decision. Certainly, at age twelve, my knowledge of Christ was far superior. So I renewed my commitment of faith based on this "advanced" knowledge.

As I look back today, I recognize that my childhood knowledge was so limited. In thirty years, when I look back to today, I pray I will have so grown in my knowledge of Christ that my 1990s faith will seem equally paltry!

For most of us, our Christian life began as an event when we first professed our faith in Him. But our knowledge of Christ is also a process. We should acknowledge His lordship in our lives again and again.

Jesus told His disciples that "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear" (John 16:12). They were too young in faith, too emotionally distraught, unable yet to see the full picture of His mission. But He also assured them that He would reveal more to them through His Spirit who would come. "He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you" (v. 14). We have that same assurance today!

Early Brethren recognized that they did not have a complete knowledge of "the fullness of Christ."

Priority 1—Becoming Like Christ (Spiritual Formation): to foster inner spiritual development that leads to outward action, by a deepening relationship with the Lord, through a life-long maturing process, toward a life of obedience to Christ lived among persons of need.

THE FIRST PRIORITY calls The Brethren Church to revival. But it's not the kind of revival we equate with annual revival services.

In the past, the annual revival services were the times when many came to know Jesus as saving Lord. Today, revival services often have few first-time professions. Certainly, we long for more persons to come to saving faith in Jesus. But Priority 1 has as much to do with us already-believers as it does with not-yet-believers.

This priority calls for "inner spiritual development that leads to outward action," a truer image of revival. That describes "spiritual awakening," a first step toward spiritual formation. David Bryant has written this definition of spir-

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

The four denominational priorities being discussed in this and the remaining three articles were adopted by the 1992 General Conference.

“Spiritual awakening begins with a ‘wake-up call’ from God to believers. . . . God’s ‘wake-up call’ is that we ‘see the fullness of Christ in new ways.’”

They freely admitted that they were open to “new light” from the Spirit as they studied God’s word together. Because we too have the written word and the Spirit to guide our understanding of it, we may continue to grow in our knowledge of Christ as we study His word together.

A Life of Obedience to Christ

An old love song said, “To know him is to love him.” To know Christ is to respond to His love. The more we know, the more we love.

But Jesus went one step further: “If you love me, you will obey what I command” (John 14:15). Obedience grows out of a deepening, loving, trusting relationship with Christ. The more we know Him, the more we long to obey Him.

My obedience to Him at age nine was so simple. It placed few demands on my life. But obedience to Christ is as demanding as the depth of our knowledge of Him. The more we know Him, the more we love Him. The more we love Him, the greater His call for a more profound obedience to His word.

Thankfully, His call for obedience is demonstrated in His great love for us. Obedience out of any motive other than a grateful response to His lavish lovingkindness results in legalism. But obedience out of love leads to a life of joyful devotion and praise!

How are we to obey Him? The Scriptures are full of His loving commands. We call one the Great Commandment, and it has two parts: to love the Lord with all our being, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:25-37).

That Great Commandment is linked to His Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20): to make disciples of all peoples. As we trust Him, love Him, and obey Him in new ways, then “we move with

Him in new ways for fulfillment of His global cause.”

Lived Among Persons of Need

Few of us live cloistered lives. We live among people with tremendous needs—homelessness, disease, addictions, dysfunctional families, greed, poverty, loneliness, injustice, unresolved conflicts, depression, despair. But behind every human need is the most basic of all needs—for reconciliation with a holy God. If my spiritual growth contributes only to my personal relationship with God, it falls short of His ideal.

In describing his life purpose in Philippians 3:10, Paul goes on to say: “I want to know . . . the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.” While Paul longed to know Christ fully and to experience the power of the risen Christ in his life, it was not for his personal benefit alone. When Jesus died on the cross, it was not to benefit Himself but for sinful, alienated, needy folks like you and me. Paul’s desire was that his knowledge of Christ and the power of Christ working in

him would directly affect the lives of others who needed a saving faith. That should be the goal of our life of faith as well.

Summary

The goal of Priority 1, then, is that as followers of Jesus Christ, we might grow in our relationship with Him and, in so doing, touch broken persons with the Good News of His lordship and saving work on the cross.

How do we come to that level of devotion? It begins as we pray together for spiritual awakening. It may begin with the intense prayer of only a few—perhaps with you. Someone has said that “revival is not organized; it is agonized.” David Bryant says the same is true for a movement of prayer for revival.

Isaiah cried out for God to “rend the heavens and come down” (64:1-8). Even so, come Lord Jesus. Wake us anew to Your presence in and among us. Mold us and make us after Your will. Renew our relationship to You; guide us in a life of obedience; minister through us to persons who need the touch of Your hand. Amen. [†]

Witnesses to the World

(continued from page 6)

churches, our missionaries, and our district and denominational leaders by our prayers, our tithes, and our gifts. By supporting them in these ways, we are witnessing through them.

Our responsibility to witness, however, does not end there. Through the Great Commission God calls all Christians to be personal witnesses for Him. He presents us with opportunities for witnessing every day. Pray that He will enable you to see and use those opportunities to His glory. Prayer is the key to open the door to those

opportunities. Be faithful to use that key.

One of God’s soul-winning servants became greatly burdened for the salvation of an unsaved girl. She resented his efforts to bring her face to face with her lostness and her need of the Savior. She told her mother of her displeasure. Said the mother angrily, “The next time he speaks to you about being saved, tell him to mind his own business!”

“But mother,” protested the girl, “he talks like this *is* his business!”

Yes, it *is* the business of every born-again believer to do his or her level best to bring the lost, perishing ones to Jesus! [†]



By Rev. Glenn Grumbling, General Conference Moderator

THE TITLE of this article is the theme for the 1993 General Conference of The Brethren Church. I'm convinced that all Christians should also have this as the theme of their daily lives until the Lord takes them home.

Why should we Christians get excited about being witnesses to the world? What should motivate us to be witnesses for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?

Our Lord commands it

We should be witnesses to the world because our Lord commanded us to be. "... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).^{*} "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20).

Christ gave this command to His disciples of the twentieth century (that's us) just as surely as He gave it to His disciples of the first century. Whether we have the gift of evangelism or we don't have the gift of evangelism, if we have received Christ as our personal Lord and Savior, we are to be His witnesses. He has called us *all* to be witnesses to the world!

God wills all to be saved

We should be witnesses to the

^{*}Quotations from the Bible are taken from the *New International Version*.

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world because it is God's will that all be saved. It is God's desire that no one be lost (1 Tim. 2:4). God has ordained that all can be saved by putting their faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Christ declared, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Christ is the only way to be saved from sin because He alone is perfect (1 Pet. 1:19). No other religious leader is capable of saving anyone. Therefore, when we witness to the world about our Lord Jesus Christ, we are seeking to fulfill God's will that everyone should be saved.

Christ's sufferings require it

We should be witnesses to the world because of the sufferings of Christ. "... the Lord Jesus Christ ... gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age ..." (Gal. 1:3-4). We should thank our Lord daily for that price He paid for our sins. His shed blood has the power to cleanse us of all our sin. The best way to thank Him is to witness to others about Him.

The Holy Spirit enables us

We should be witnesses to the world because of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Our Lord promises us, "... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you ..." (Acts 1:8). The power we Christians received when we invited Christ into our lives is the fulfillment of that promise of Christ to us. It proves that we have a resurrected Savior and an indwelling Holy Spirit. Through the presence of the Holy Spirit, our Savior lives in our lives.

Christians unleash the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives by being witnesses to the world.

The gospel has power to save

We should be witnesses to the world because of the power of the gospel. The Apostle Paul declared, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes ..." (Rom. 1:16).

In this gospel, which we have been given to proclaim to the world, we can see God's answer to every human need. The gospel is so powerful that through it, God can cure every problem in this world when His disciples ask Him and have faith in Him to do so.

Christ promises to be with us

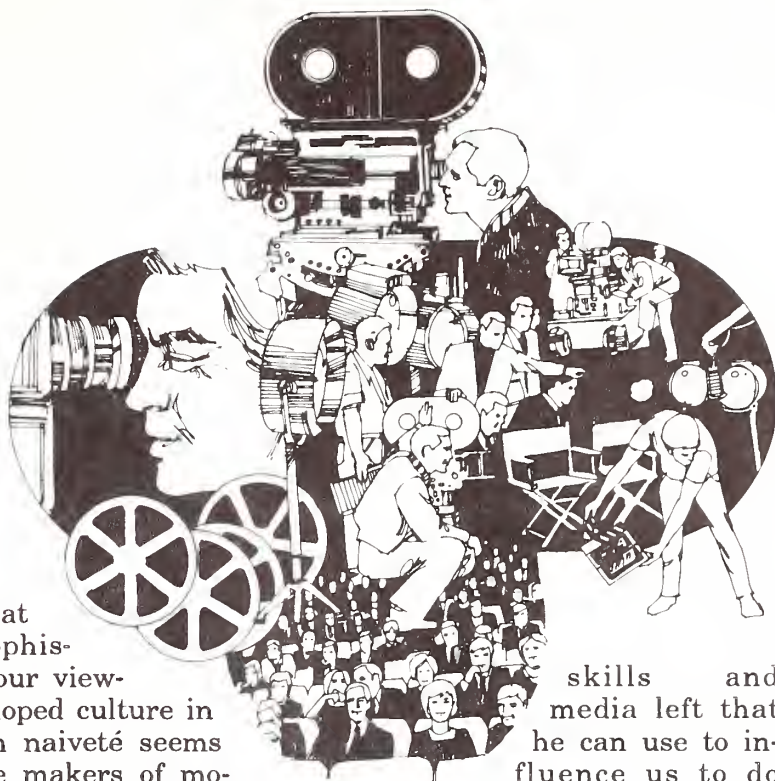
We should be witnesses to the world because of the promise Christ gave us: "And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). It's assuring to realize that our Lord never sends us out to witness on our own. When He sends us, He goes with us.

In Exodus 3:11, Moses asked God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" And God answered, "I will be with you." This is the key to our faith! Since the Lord is with us, we shouldn't be afraid or unwilling to go *anywhere* to witness of Him. The question should never be "Who am I?" but "Who is He Who is in me?"

God gives all of us the opportunity to be witnesses by proxy. We may do so by supporting our
(continued on page 5)

Seeing and Believing

By Gary B. Swanson



IN 1903 the motion picture *The Great Train Robbery* shocked its wide-eyed viewing audiences. In the concluding frames of the film, gunslinger George Barnes turned and fired two shots from his pistol directly at the camera, then disappeared in the smoke.

People in the audience screamed and ducked behind the seats in front of them. Because of their unfamiliarity with this riveting new medium of communication, they thought they were actually being fired upon.

A false view of reality

A modern version of the same thing is going on in some of the more remote and underdeveloped corners of today's world. J.J. Martin, an author and former Peace Corps volunteer to Papua New Guinea, only a hundred miles north of Australia, tells of primitive cultures there that he describes as being "caught in limbo between the stone age and the ice age."

One such group, for instance, gets together inside a Catholic mission where they can watch American-made movies on a generator-powered VCR. Among this group, Martin writes, Sylvester Stallone has become a violent god. They view the actor's exploits on the screen as literal happenings. They have no concept of scripts or acting or stunts or out-takes. To them, it's as if the camera just happened to be on hand when these memorable events took place.

As members of a "civilized" society,

we may laugh at this lack of sophistication. From our viewpoint in a developed culture in the 1990s, such naiveté seems quaint. But the makers of motion pictures have come a long way since 1903, and now they are implementing their new skills in our living rooms on television. Thanks to the combination of computers and television, images are being transformed to the extent that we may not be sure that we can believe what we are seeing.

In a recent TV commercial for Diet Coke, pop star Elton John sits at his piano and sings a catchy tune. Standing next to him and joking with him is the legendary jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong—who has been dead for more than 20 years. And computer-enhanced scenes have juxtaposed images of yesterday's movie stars James Cagney and Humphrey Bogart with modern-day party-goers.

Obviously this is a clever manipulation of technology in the interest of selling more Diet Coke. Any semi-sophisticated TV viewer of the 1990s can see that. But it makes you wonder a bit about what they'll be able to do next. If such skills were in the wrong hands, someone would be able to deceive many of us into making decisions we wouldn't otherwise make.

The devil has his tricks too

If Hollywood today can frighten millions of viewers with Freddy Kreuger—even when they know the whole thing is pretend—surely the devil has a few communication

skills and media left that he can use to influence us to do things we ordinarily wouldn't. Let's face it, if we try to match wits with the devil on our own, we're way out of our league.

The media are a gift from God. But the devil can use them in the same way he can corrupt any of God's other gifts. This means that we must be ever more careful of the effects of the media on our lives. Can any of us truly claim that the media have absolutely no influence on us? Surely none of us makes a god of Sylvester Stallone—or do we? And just exactly why do we choose one brand of soft drink over another?

We can protect ourselves

These are the kinds of questions we Christians should be asking ourselves as we face the thousands of messages that the media are bombarding us with every day. The good news is that we *can* protect ourselves against being deceived by the devil. At first glance, some may wonder how the Bible—written thousands of years before television, radio, and motion pictures were developed—could be of any help to us in facing the influence that these media have upon us. But the timeless principles of God's word will never be obsolete.

In his letter to the Philippians, for example, Paul lists some very practical ways to evaluate the messages we receive from the

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Using Instruments That Reflect Our Priority on Worship

By Ronald L. Sprunger

ANY PERSON skilled in a craft knows the value of a quality tool. Imagine the response a surgeon would make if he was handed a hunting knife and asked to perform delicate surgery. A contractor who was a member of the governing board of our church influenced a decision to purchase a new piano for the worship center by comparing the musician's need for a quality instrument to his own need for tools that enable him to do fine work.

There are times, of course, when one must perform under adverse circumstances, like the renowned violinist who had a string break during a performance. That was bad enough, but then two more strings broke. To everyone's amazement, the violinist completed his rendition of the work on the one string that remained.

Once, when I expressed disappointment in the quality of instrument that a church provided for ministry, I was told this story and admonished to use whatever was provided for God's glory, even if it had but one string. The story and the admonition seemed to satisfy the one who shared it with me. The thing the person perhaps forgot was that Maestro Paganini very likely replaced the strings before playing his next selection.

What if the situation persists?

Most of us have the grace to meet the challenge of difficult situations. But what do you do when the situation persists Sun-

day after Sunday, year after year?

Many would agree that worship is a priority in the life of a congregation. But do they realize that the instruments used to lead and support congregational worship should also be a priority? In worship we gather to meet the living God, and we are empowered to live the Christian life. What occasion could be more significant in the life of the church? What occasion more worthy of a costly investment?

What do we value most?

During the past few years my wife Linda and I have had the privilege of ministering in churches of many denominations. Often the musical instruments are of average or better-than-average quality. Often they are not. It seems that for some of God's people, paved parking lots, well-equipped kitchens, computers, laser printers, and even sound systems are valued more than quality keyboard instruments.

Recently I took courage and shared my concern with a host pastor. I appreciated his willingness to listen. His response was that many people see no reason for concern as long as the church has instruments with keys that work. He agreed that instruments should be regarded as an integral part of a building program and financed along with other essentials such as pulpit, altar, and pews, so that they would not be viewed as an added financial burden at a later time.

Few congregations would be satisfied with used pews or carpet in a new building. So why do they

continue to use instruments that should have been replaced long ago? A question that I would ask each reader to prayerfully consider is this: Which of the material items that often takes precedence contributes more to the spiritual life of a congregation than the instruments used in the offering of praise and worship?

When buying a new piano for the sanctuary, some churches move the old sanctuary piano to the children's department. But is this a good decision in light of research which shows that the most significant musical development of the ear occurs before the age of eight?

A gentleman who tuned church pianos would routinely ask whether the piano in the children's department needed tuning. All too often the response was: "It's OK. It's used only for the children."

As the young child's ears are developing, it is important to provide in-tune instruments to guide that development. An instrument that is not large enough to support and inspire congregational worship could be used in the children's department, but only if it has good tone and still holds its pitch.

How does it sound?

The in-tuneness of an instrument is not the only factor to consider. Quality of sound is also important. During the past school year we were blessed by the musical offerings of a student who is a professional musician and master performer. God is using her gifts to reach others in her professional field.

Dr. Sprunger is Professor of Church Music at Ashland Theological Seminary.

"In worship we gather to meet the living God, and we are empowered to live the Christian life. What occasion could be more significant in the life of the church? What occasion more worthy of a costly investment?"

When I discovered that this student also possessed more than adequate keyboard ability, I asked her if she might be interested in studying organ. Her response was interesting. She said that the church she attended as a child and youth didn't have an organ that produced inspiring sounds. She was a university student when she heard exciting organ sounds for the first time in her life.

In view of the consequences, churches, colleges, and seminaries should give serious consideration to the quality of those things that serve as models in the process of spiritual formation. If future Christian leaders hear organs,

pianos, and other musical instruments that have strength and beauty of tone, perhaps they will be less apt to allow the churches they serve to continue on the pathway of mediocrity in this important area of ministry.

Are we giving our best?

In my endeavor to promote quality in music ministry, I find that I must search my own heart to determine whether my motive is to seek the best for God's glory and the edification of His people, or to fulfill my personal desires. The concluding lines of a hymn by Howard B. Grose are challenging words for each of us:

*Give of your best to the Master,
Naught else is worthy His love;
He gave Himself for your ransom,
Gave up His glory above:
Laid down His life without murmur,
You from sin's ruin to save;
Give Him your heart's adoration,
Give Him the best that you have.*

As I look across a church parking lot, I see automobiles that cost thousands of dollars. In spite of their great cost, most of them will last only a few years. In contrast, a quality piano or organ that is properly maintained will last for decades, continuing as an instrument of praise from one generation to the next. Is it costly? Yes. Worth it? I think *He* is. [†]

Seeing and Believing

(continued from page 7)

media: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (4:8, *KJV*).

It's important not to overlook the underlying basis for this list. It tells us to *analyze* what we see and hear and think about. We aren't supposed to just soak up the messages that come our way without considering their value—or lack of it. A thinking Christian cannot be a "couch potato."

Second, Paul provides a specific checklist by which we Christians can measure the impact that the media may be having on our lives. We are to read, view, or listen to those things that are: true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.

With a list as practical as this, we don't have to be terribly sophisticated to judge the effects of the media on our lives. When the messages from Wall Street and Hollywood beam our way, we can be ready for them. We don't have to believe everything we see. And most of us would be better off seeing less in the first place. [†]

Thoughts for the New Year:

Live Today

Forget the past and live the present hour;
Now is the time to work, the time to fill
The soul with noblest thoughts, the time to will
Heroic deeds, to use whatever dower
Heaven has bestowed, to test our utmost power.

Now is the time to love, and better still,
To serve our loved ones, over passing ill
To rise triumphant; thus the perfect flower
Of life shall come to fruitage; wealth amass
For grandest giving ere the time be gone.

Be glad today, tomorrow may bring tears;
Be brave today, the darkest night will pass,
And golden rays will usher in the dawn;
Who conquers now shall rule the coming years.

Sarah Knowles Bolton, 1841–1916

Somalia:

A Call for Diplomatic Initiatives

Military intervention alone cannot provide a lasting solution to the troubles that plague Somalia.

By Sharon Pauling

WE ARE PUTTING BAND-AIDS on Somalia's wounds with Operation Restore Hope, but not treating the infection which threatens that nation. Military intervention is necessary to save lives now, but it does not address the root political and economic causes of the crisis. Without equally energetic attention to diplomatic efforts, the violence, starvation and suffering will continue long after U.S. troops leave Somalia.

Bread for the World, the U.S.'s largest citizens' movement against hunger, welcomes the United Nation's efforts to provide security forces to assure the delivery of food in Somalia. An estimated 2,000 people are dying every day in that country. Many of these senseless deaths can be avoided by protecting food and relief workers.

Nevertheless, it is imperative that a greater emphasis be placed on long-term diplomatic solutions. Military intervention alone cannot provide a lasting solution to the troubles that plague Somalia. If handled wrongly, intervention could inadvertently strengthen the power of some militia leaders, and deepen the resolve of others to continue with violence.

Violence breeds violence

Use of military force is risky, as it perpetuates the practice of using weapons and violence to resolve problems between clans. The current humanitarian crisis has its origins in deposed dictator Siad Barre's militarized approach to subduing Somali factions. For more than 20 years, Barre's regime used Soviet and U.S. weapons to ruthlessly

repress the Somali people through divide-and-rule tactics. The country has been left with a legacy of clan fighting, death, and starvation.

Bread for the World believes that if military intervention in Somalia is to be successful, it must be accompanied by long-lasting diplomatic efforts to foster peace and democracy. In addition to enhancing security at major ports, airstrips, and along food distribution corridors, correspondingly energetic diplomatic initiatives need to be launched to bring peace to the nation.

A peace process

The United Nations needs to launch a peace process that is broadly inclusive of clan elders, community leaders, and militia leaders that lays the groundwork for developing governing structures. The process must recognize that solutions cannot be imposed from the outside, but must be conceived, embraced, and implemented by Somalis. Intervention that merely takes a band-aid approach to Somalia's open sores could lead to further degeneration, rather than to healing.

Community structures still exist throughout Somalia and need to be supported. All relief operations and conflict resolution should build on current efforts of Somalis who are attempting to bring peace to their nation. Intervention should also take into consideration the recovery needs and political will of the people in the northwest region, the unrecognized Republic of Somaliland.

The length of time needed for military intervention is uncertain. Efforts to exit quickly could threaten long-lasting peace and preempt a broadly inclusive process, especially if internationally facilitated negotiations favor militia leaders over others. General Farah Aided as well as Mohamed Ali Mahdi support the U.S. plan to send large numbers of troops. Aided, as the stronger military leader, especially sees the plan as a means of bolstering his strength.

Since 1974 Bread for the World has supported initiatives designed to help end recurring hunger and famine in Africa. By actively supporting peace, democracy, and long-term sustainable development in Africa, the international community can avoid massive famine and the more costly and less desirable alternatives of providing emergency food aid and mobilizing military intervention. Somalia is a good place to start breaking the cycle of human suffering. [†]

World Relief Working With Other Groups in Somalia

With the U.S. now leading a United Nations force to secure the safe delivery of relief supplies into Somalia, World Relief Corporation of the National Association of Evangelicals has joined other evangelical groups in their efforts to provide needed medical supplies to the neediest people of that country.

David Loudon, World Relief's director of operations for Africa, left December 21 to meet in Somalia with other evangelical agencies to determine longer-term action.

"We believe that the sheer scale of this crisis calls for individual Christians, churches and evangelical organizations to join together and share their resources and gifts as a demonstration of Christ's love," Loudon said.

Prior to the U.S. landing in Mogadishu, the lack of security in Somalia made it impossible to guarantee safe, effective delivery of assistance. World Relief also continues to support efforts to provide life-saving water to several villages in Kenya along the Somalia border, where hundreds of thousands of Somalis have fled.

World Relief also assists Somali refugees who have been approved by the U.S. for resettlement. In the next year, World Relief expects to resettle 250 to 350 Somali refugees throughout the U.S.

Ms. Pauling is Africa Policy Analyst with Bread for the World. She is considered a leading expert on African famine issues, especially on the role of U.S. foreign policy in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, and southern Africa. She has developed many policy initiatives on hunger, development, human rights, and militarization in Africa.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



January-February 1993

Volume 6, Number 3

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

When you read this, Thanksgiving and Christmas will already be history! We spent Thanksgiving in North Carolina with John and Cheryl and their boys, and all of our children and grandchildren were at our house for Christmas. I trust your holidays were happy and that you had a chance to be with family and friends.

As I write this, I am in sunny Arizona. My husband is attending a conference and I came along to relax and rest. The sunshine feels so good! We left snow in Ohio. We worshiped one Sunday in the Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson.

In November we attended services in New Lebanon, where our son Jim is pastor. Our grandson, Nathan, was baptized during the morning service. It was a thrill to be a part of that service! Jim's scripture that morning was from Philippians. He reminded us that we need to build our lives on solid rock—not on sand. We need to make sure our lives are grounded in faith. We should be faithful in meeting together to encourage one another. Paul, in Philippians 4:1, encourages the people to stand firm in the Lord. As we begin 1993, let's be sure we are faithful to our Lord. When we are faithful to God, we find it easier to be the person God wants us to be. We will want to spend time in fellowship with family and with Christian friends.

In my last letter, I said I had some goals for our WMS. The one I would like us to think about this month is to make all of our WMS societies more aware of our missionaries: where they serve, some of the problems they have in individual countries, and what can we do to assist them in their work. A missionary family is pictured each month on the calendar that is printed by the Missionary Board. (Check with Ginny Hoyt in the office, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805, if you need one.) Many WMS circles have a
(continued on page 3)

Missionary Miscellany

At General Conference, Marilyn Aspinall told of the soon-to-be women's conference in Argentina, their probable attendance despite hardships the women face, and their offering goal. Soon after the Conference, Marilyn wrote.

November 18, 1992

Dear Joan,

Yesterday we received the *Evangelist* with the WMS newsletter and I again remembered that I owed you a letter. I can't believe that it's been a month and a half since we returned to Argentina! This last year here will be over before we know it — and perhaps before we are ready for it!

My time was completely absorbed upon arrival back "home" with the preparations for our Annual Women's Conference at Eden, since I was the speaker this year. I had pretty well organized the ideas and materials for the four messages, but I did have to spend quite a lot of time (more than I had imagined) polishing them up, eliminating and adding to, etc., and then finally typing them. I use a manuscript, but usually have it worn out with "goings over" before the actual event. I just like to have a record of what I have presented. Also, this time it was a big thing — four one-hour messages. The Lord really blessed and lives were touched, according to comments people personally made to me afterward. Praise the Lord! The theme was on "Life's Crises" and seemed to be contemporary, as you can well imagine with the world we live in today. The one thing for which I especially thanked the Lord (and I had previously asked Him for it) was the complete liberty I had in the presentations.

There was a strange incident right before I was about to present the third message. I felt oppressed and very tired, hardly able to stand up, and was praying very hard while the ladies finished the praise part of the meeting. It occurred to me to ask Nelly Rivero

to pray publicly for me before I delivered the message, as I sat there, feeling all that pressure. One of the girls from Soldini was leading the meeting and, without any contact with her, she said, "And now before we turn the meeting over to Marilyn for her message from the Lord, I would like to ask Nelly Rivero to offer prayer on her behalf." How I praised the Lord! We are truly fighting against "principalities and powers" these days as we deliver the Word. But "He that is in us is stronger than he that is against us." Praise His name!

The Conference was well attended, a few less than other years because of the terrible costs of transportation, but we did have around 120 women. There was a lovely open spirit among us and we truly felt the communion with each other and with the Lord. The exciting thing was that when the time came to present the results of the goal we were all a bit cautious about being sure we had made it. But, if you remember, I believe I had shared with the Conference in Ashland that we always seem to make it somehow — even though the ladies risk doubling the amount each year (at least in the past). We had had goals of \$500, then \$1,000, then \$2,000, and then this year they really threw out a challenge and made the goal of \$5,000. We all rejoiced together as the Treasurer reported that we had offered to the Lord a total of \$5,600. How's that for faith? Praise the Lord for His goodness; he still multiplies the loaves and the fishes!

(continued on page 4)



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"Flowers or Missions"

I have very often wondered
 about the flowers we give,
 To put on graves of loved ones,
 Forgetting the needy that live.
 There are dear ones in the far lands
 Never a Bible do they see.
 Just gather a bunch of wild flowers,
 That will be sufficient for me.

Some folks spend their hundreds,
 For those who cannot see,
 While people grope in darkness,
 Across the deep blue sea.
 I'd rather have flowers from your garden,
 Or blossoms that grow on your tree.
 Just gather a small bunch of either,
 That will be sufficient for me.

The money spent for flowers,
 Would carry the Gospel abroad,
 To help some poor lost sinner,
 Find peace in our Wonderful Lord.
 So put your money in Missions,
 Help save the lost souls you see.
 A few lovely flowers from your garden,
 Will be sufficient for me.

I'm going to the Heavenly City
 With Jesus my Saviour to be,
 And there with dear loved ones
 forever,
 From suffering I'll ever be free.
 I'll sit by the beautiful river,
 Neath the shade of the evergreen
 tree,
 Breathe the fragrance of flowers
 forever.
 And that will be glory for me.

Anna Mullett

This thought-provoking poem was read by Linda Faust as a part of the Thank-Offering service during General Conference in August. Anna is a deceased member of the College Corner WMS.

President's Pen (continued)

missions chairperson who will spend 5-10 minutes each meeting with some bit of interesting information on one or more of the missionary families. Again, the Missionary Board provides regular "Spotlights" to assist us. You might include any prayer requests for
 (continued on page 4)

In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Psalm 116:15

The Memorial Service, presented at General Conference by the ladies from the Pennsylvania District, honored these members deceased in 1991-92:

Southeast District

Ruth Finks	Maurertown
Lois Byrd	Mt. Olive
Sallie Diehl	Mt. Olive
Mabel Keplinger	Hagerstown
Katherine Mongan	Hagerstown

Pennsylvania District

Katherine Wilson	Sergeantsville
Thelma Fish	Pleasant View

Ohio District

Norma Roesch	New Lebanon
	Afternoon
Alda Johnson	New Lebanon
	Afternoon
Lola Knight	Williamstown

Indiana District

Alice Ambridge	North Manchester
	Hadassah
Ellen Bundy	North Manchester
	Hadassah
Leva Krill	Bryan
Wilma Hoffman	Bryan
Catherine Miller	Loree
Esther Kizer	Burlington
Jessie Hawkins	College Corner
Lorena Zent	Roanoke

Midwest District

Ethel Schroedl	Falls City
Lela Grieve	Mulvane

Florida District

Jenny Blus	Sarasota Day
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THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

Mrs. Dorman Ronk, Editor
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 Ashland, Ohio 44805

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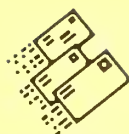
Missionary Miscellany (continued)

Well, several hours later. I talked to the Camp Administrator's wife on the phone and she mentioned that they were on their way to Rosario and would stop in a minute. She had a birthday this week, so I said, "Come in and eat supper with us!" After a short protest, she did agree to come, along with Eusebio, her husband. I quick ran down to a nearby flower shop, bought her a pretty arrangement for a centerpiece and wrote a quick birthday note. Then Ray ran to the little corner market where you can buy food (delicious things) already prepared. I fixed a salad, had melon with ham for the first course, the barbecued chicken and french fries (with the salad) for the main course, and then had made baked apples, which I served with whipped cream for dessert, plus coffee. It all went together fast, as is the usual process here when someone drops by. We had a delightful evening with Doris and Eusebio from the Soldini congregation and Eden camp! We needed a break for friends yesterday.

We both are keeping busy with things, which perhaps don't show so much. Ray has the responsibility of writing for the Brethren Church, coordinating the many young people who are studying in the various Bible schools and seminaries and who are from various Brethren Churches, so they are mindful of Brethren Doctrines, and also take into account their own church and its needs, when they are ready to go out and serve the Lord after schooling. We both have "clients" for counseling who come with established hours to our home. It's such a blessing seeing the Lord work in these individual lives and help them to see that their problems can be solved "in Him."

In early November we were in the province of Cordoba for a Youth Mission Conference. There were over 1,000 young people from all South America. Ray had a seminar on "Models of Missionary Training." We stayed in a hotel filled with youth from Paraguay. It was a delightful experience being with them. The Lord is calling Latin Americans to the mission field and Argentina is a sending country too! Praise the Lord! This mass of youth singing praises and offering their lives to the Lord was a real "emotional" experience for all present and we are praying that it will go far beyond the emotional stage to "reality." Pray with us.

Content in His service,
Marilyn J. Aspinall
Psalm 92:1-2.



This letter, translated, was received by the Missionary Board from the Women Missionary Society in Argentina.

Colon, July 1992

To James R. Black, Executive Director
Of our affection in the Lord:

We greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and we wish that God's blessings will enrich your life and ministry.

The reason for this letter is to inform you that the Board of the Women Missionary Society organizes annually in the property of the Eden Camp in Soldini, Province of Santa Fe, our Women Congress at the National level, with the purpose of fellowship as women of The Brethren Church in Argentina, so that together we can praise our God, meditate in the Bible, share gifts and experiences and with our offerings try to reach the goals established every year, being priority to help the missionary work which extends to neighborhood countries like Paraguay, the Shalom orphanage, Eden Camp in Soldini, and Diquecito Camp in Cordoba.

As we look the course of the Eden Camp at Soldini, we cannot cease to bless and thank the Women Missionary Society in the United States for the significant offering sent in 1962, which allowed us to buy that large and valuable place, where we are blessed by our God every time we meet there.

We want to call your attention to the fact that the Lord willing, in October of this year, our Women Congress will celebrate its 25 years of existence, and being our Silver Anniversary of that importance, we do want to make you participants of this significant event.

With the joy of being Christ's servants, and with our hearts filled with recognition and gratitude, we greet you in the Name that is above all other Name.

In the name of the Women Missionary Society,

Mrs. Nelly Rivero, president and
Mrs. Norma Ferreri, Secretary

President's Pen (continued)

the missionaries that appear in the Prayer and Praise at this time. There are many things you can do. If any of you have tried something special to make your society more aware of our missionaries, please write and let me know, so the information can be shared.

When I visited India in 1987, I was so impressed with the boys' orphanage. But as I traveled around with the

Kumars, I saw a need to help the young girls as well. There was a real need for the girls' orphanage. Now, with our National Project for 1992-93, this home has become a reality. Let's make the project offering for this year in 1993 the largest ever.

Shirley Black

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

What joy it was to read the letters from Marilyn and Nelly. The faith of the WMS and the Missionary Board in 1962 to receive offerings for the national project — to buy the Camp Eden in Argentina — has borne fruit. I hope you are excited about this report. And then re-read Marilyn's letter for the report of the Women's Conference at this site. You were there!

The Aspinalls are concluding their years of ministry in Argentina this year. They are depending on our prayers for their guidance in decisions which they make.

Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles leave January 14 to begin intensive language training January 18. Keep them in your prayers.

When I was a child in Waterloo, the Sunday School superintendent in the Primary Department gave us name verses. These were verses which she wrote in the front of our Bibles that began with the initials of our first and last names. I don't remember that the name verses came at a certain birthday, but I have special thoughts of mine at birthday time. This year the President's Inauguration occurs near my birthday and again this year we need to pray intensely for the President and his Cabinet.

My name verse which began with R is this: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people", Proverbs 14:34. In order for the course of events in this country to change, the Christians will need to stand for God's commandments, the Biblical truths which many know but few practice. One lady expressed the silent minority like this, "The greatest danger for those of us trying to bring about change is to be afraid to speak out."

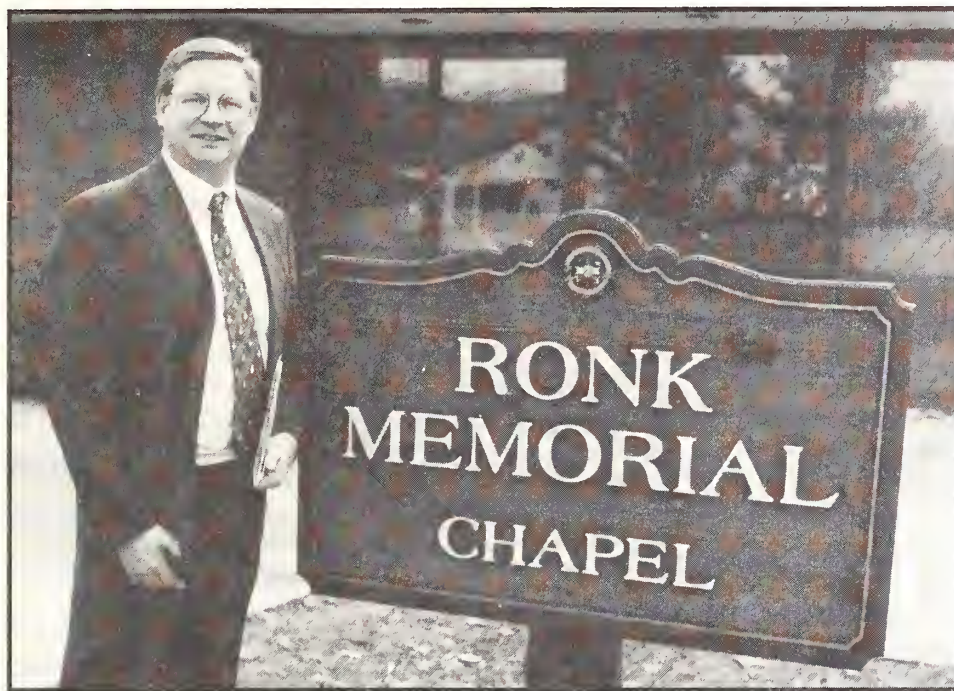
The new year is an appropriate time to rekindle your love for the Lord and seek to bring about a change in your Jerusalem. Be my prayer partner.

Your friend,

Joan

Enlarging the Vision of Ministry

By Dr. Frederick J. Finks, Vice President



MINISTRY through Ashland Theological Seminary has definitely broadened my vision of the work of the Lord. So often one can develop tunnel vision to the point that ministry becomes a narrowly defined field of one's own experience. But interaction with a larger community of believers allows one to see various avenues of ministry and stretches one to enlarge one's own vision.

It is easy to define the structure of an organization. A line chart can be drawn to describe who reports to whom and who is responsible for what. But describing a living organism is much more difficult. It involves the intersection and interaction of people—people who care about one another and who carry deep commitments to their areas of responsibility, seeing them as more than jobs, but as a mission to which they wholeheartedly give of themselves. That is the character of Ashland Theological Seminary.

Our story is told through the lives of the Brethren men and women who serve here. My story is only one of many. Mine is a multidimensional story because of the complexity and challenges that I face each day. It is

TEACHING at ATS is very fulfilling. I am doing what God called me to do. I am teaching persons who want to learn. I experience congenial Christian community and get paid for it.

God's call came early in my life. I managed, however, to resist that call for twelve years. It was a call to join the eternal God in a redeeming ministry. It was a call to equip persons for ministry. I've seen persons that I wouldn't have called, but God saw what they could become. It's wonderful to see the transforming power of God at work in an individual. It's wonderful to see persons mature and grow into ministry.

The seminary is a giant classroom where Greek, Hebrew, theology, mission, history, homiletics, administration, education, and pastoral care are taught. The seminary is also where a

one of ministry, a call so deeply implanted within me that I find it difficult to conceive of doing anything else. My life is enriched by the daily opportunities of worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, and community that I experience at Ashland Seminary.

Our seminary is no ordinary place. It is extraordinary because of the people who choose to be here. Faculty members are faithful to their calling. Their commitment is a constant encouragement. Together we have learned to depend upon one another, like links in a chain. We pray for one another, daily interacting beyond the surface level, as Paul described, "rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep."

Ashland Seminary really is someplace special, where faith and life intertwine and where vision is enlarged. [†]



person can grow spiritually through regular spiritual growth groups. The seminary is a community where the eternal God is worshiped and we bear one another's burdens. The seminary is a place of prayer.

I find teaching at ATS very fulfilling.
*Dr. Richard Allison,
Director of Doctoral Studies*

Ashland Theological Seminary

WHEN I BEGAN my doctoral studies in educational leadership, I never dreamed I would eventually teach and become academic dean at Ashland Theological Seminary. Delbert Flora, however, confirmed for me God's call to this position on the day of the interview in a delightful encounter we had in chapel. God does work in strange and mysterious ways to accomplish His will!

At first, I felt I had been removed from the important front-line work in the church to the sidelines of teaching. After a few months with seminary students, however, I realized that I was really equipping others to do the work of ministry in the local church. I had replaced myself in the local church setting with countless others who were called to minister in a variety of denominations.

The excitement in teaching in this seminary is seeing the many changes that take place in students' lives during this educational and spiritual journey. They study, learn, pray, and minister to others in ways I never dreamed possible, and for that I praise God. The local church is the beneficiary of all that takes place at Ashland Theological Seminary.

Teaching is fun, but involvement in administration is the joy of my life. It calls forth every spiritual gift I have been given. I view administration as the ultimate servant role, and I am challenged every day to find new ways of smoothing the academic path for staff, students, and faculty.



Thanks be to God for granting me this opportunity to serve Him.

Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal, Academic Dean

DAVID CHANCEY tells the story of two classmates who met on campus during homecoming after having not seen each other for many years. Their conversation went like this:

The first lady said, "I've gotten married since we last met."

The second lady replied, "Oh, that's good!"

The first responded, "Well, I don't know. He's twice my age."

The second replied, "Oh, that's bad."

The first responded, "Yes, except that he's a millionaire."

The second replied, "Oh, that's good!"

The first said, "Yes, except he won't give me a cent."

The second answered, "Oh, that's bad."

The first said, "Well, I don't know about that. He did build me a \$200,000 house."

The second responded, "Oh, that's good."

The first said, "Well, I don't know about that. It burned down last week."

The second responded, "Oh, that's bad."

To which the first lady said, "Oh, I don't know. He was in it!"

Just like being married to the rich man, teaching at Ashland Theological Seminary is not a perfect situation. There are the trips to Cleveland, Columbus, and Detroit; the piles of papers to grade; the writing assignments (like this one); and the few students who could stand to be a bit more motivated.

But of course no job is perfect, and I knew that when I accepted this position. Furthermore, I can't think of anything I'd rather do. Ashland Theological Seminary is an exciting place at which to be. The faculty members are among the finest people I have met and a joy to work with. The students are eager to learn and dedicated to their calls to ministry. It is indeed a challenge and a humbling experience to have an opportunity to

impact the leadership of the church for many years to come.

My goals are that students would leave my classes with greater skills/understanding in preaching, with an ability to assist individuals with the problems that arise in life, and with a keen sense of their personal strengths and the ways they affect others. If students can successfully accomplish these goals, the church will continue to grow, and we all will be "richer" in Christ.

*Dr. John Shultz,
Professor of Pastoral Counseling*





ONCE UPON A TIME there was a pastor of a medium-sized congregation in Suburban Village, U.S. He served for many years, was very faithful to his ministry, and was loved by his parishioners. Unfortunately, due to health problems, this pastor had to announce his retirement after a number of years of service. The congregation looked for a replacement. They needed pastoral leadership. Could they find anyone?

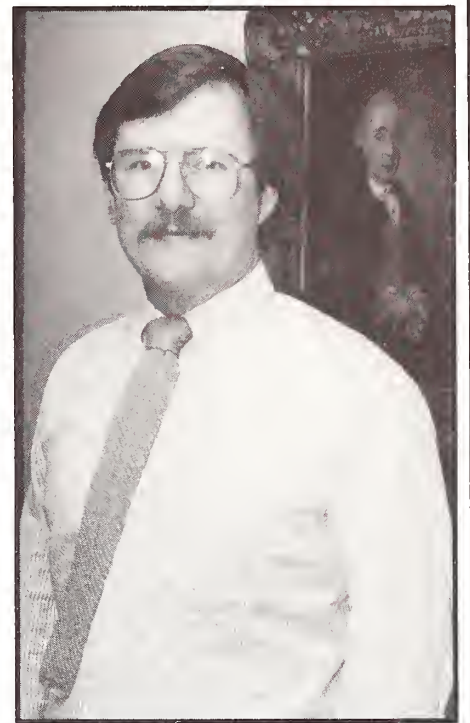
This is basically what Ashland Theological Seminary is all about. In each generation God calls persons to proclaim His gospel. We on the seminary staff have the distinct privilege of guiding many of those people in their training, so that they can take their places in the ongoing progression of those who have ministered and then have moved on.

Affecting the lives of those who have committed themselves to ministry is a sacred trust from God. We who attempt to teach and to train realize the implications of the words "privilege" and "sacred trust." We rejoice in the opportunity to assist in the development of those who would seek to minister in congregations throughout the world!

*Rev. Bradley Weidenhamer,
Seminary Librarian*

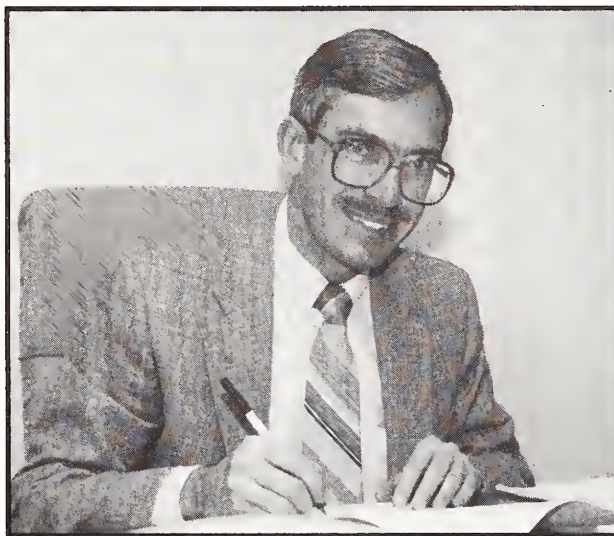
WHILE REGRETTING in some ways having to leave friends and work in South Africa, we felt that it was God's call on our lives to serve him in Ashland. He has blessed us by providing contacts even in northeastern Ohio with several students from southern Africa, as well as from numerous other countries. That is one of the privileges of teaching at ATS—the mission field comes to our very door.

It also is good that the administration is seeing that teaching, while the key ministry of a seminary, is aided by academic research and writing and by attending conferences and meeting with colleagues from around the world. This is yet another way by which the seminary community can reach out in ministry beyond its four walls into areas of the church where we cannot be physically present. With the quality of gifted colleagues with whom I am privileged to work, I trust that these opportunities might multiply, for the



glory of God and the furtherance of His kingdom.

*Dr. David W. Baker, Professor of
Old Testament and Semitic Languages*



AS the newest faculty member at Ashland Theological Seminary, I am excited about being a part of a community that values both the academic and spiritual development of students (and faculty!). This is important to me, for having earned my doctorate at a seminary that emphasized academic excellence, I witnessed first hand the spiritual dryness that can accompany such an emphasis. The Ashland Theological Seminary

community seeks to model a reasoned faith. The goal of such a faith is to prepare students for the challenge of ministry in the modern world, but also to instill in them the necessity of a growing relationship with God and concern for one's neighbor.

Though it may seem that I am no longer in "pastoral ministry," in truth I

still am. I continue to minister to men and women who are part of Christ's body. But just as important, these students are the present and future leaders of our church. They will extend the pastoral ministry they have seen modeled in the seminary community into hundreds and thousands of churches across America and around the world.

*Dr. Dale R. Stoffer, Assistant
Professor of Historical Theology*



WHAT DOES TEACHING at Ashland Seminary mean to me? It is the call of God upon my life. When I finished my seminary studies, I planned to be a pastor the rest of my days. But God led me into the specialized ministry of teaching at the graduate level. I have never left "the ministry." I am doing what my Maker created me to do, and thus—no matter how hard or tiring it can sometimes be—it is right. It is one way of glorifying God with my life.

How does my work benefit the church? It multiplies my ministry. In twenty years of teaching I have been in contact with hundreds of students who entered Christian service of all kinds—pastors, missionaries, evangelists, counselors, professors, and church workers of every description. I thank God for the privilege of a far-flung ministry through them.

How does my work shape the lives of students? There is more to seminary teaching than what happens in the classroom. There are opportunities to counsel students and sometimes to pastor them. There are challenges to speak in chapel and participate weekly in spiritual formation groups. There are faculty prayer meetings which are more frequent than committee meetings. There are opportunities for mentoring individuals in person as well as by letters and telephone calls.

Ashland Seminary is a place of worship, study, fellowship, bonding, and equipping for students who come. For us who are called to its faculty, it is also a place of prayer, joyful labor, and growth in Christlikeness. I would almost pay to work there!

Dr. Jerry Flora, Professor of New Testament Theology

ONE OF THE GREATEST BLESSINGS of teaching at ATS is the continuous inspiration brought into my life by the student leaders with whom I am privileged to work. The excellence, diligence, commitment, sacrifice, and creativity which the students demonstrate in their service to Jesus Christ keep me humbled and encouraged. In spite of all the negative news in the media, I can see the mighty hand of God at work in the world through these students—and I am encouraged.

The faculty at the seminary keep me challenged and growing by the witness of their lives. To the extent that I am a better person and a more capable leader today than I was six years ago, my colleagues can take much of the credit. It is also apparent to me that God has done a unique (even miraculous) work here at ATS in helping people of great diversity work constructively together so that all may grow to the glory of God and the furtherance of His kingdom. Faculty, staff, and students help encourage personal and professional growth better here than in any other setting I have ever seen.

My work at the seminary has given me a chance to help make this world a little better place. I believe my course in "Communication and Conflict Resolution" is making an especially timely contribution to the health of the church. An ongoing pattern of successful conflict management substantially influences the potential for church growth. Involvement in the CALM (Church Administration for Leadership and Management) program with Jerry Flora and Mary Ellen Drushal and in various other leadership development activities (Summer Crusaders, Seminary for a Day, Men of Mission, Brethren conferences, Southwest Pastoral Counseling Program) have allowed me to serve the church as a resource.

I believe that God has given each person a variety of gifts,

talents, abilities, and experiences. Helping students become aware of these riches within them and helping them believe they can make a difference for Jesus Christ in this day has been a continuing goal. I am seeing fruit in their lives. Working at ATS has presented opportunities beyond measure. Surely I am one of the richest people who ever lived.

*Dr. Douglas Little,
Associate Professor of Psychology*





View of the Sarasota First Brethren Church buildings following construction and remodeling. Vanator Hall is at the left of the picture and the Education Building extends to the right. The sanctuary building, barely visible, is to the left of Vanator Hall.

Sarasota First Brethren Church Dedicates New Addition and Remodeled Buildings

Sarasota, Fla. — The Sarasota First Brethren Church held a day of dedication on Sunday, December 6, to celebrate the completion of a building and remodeling project.

This project became necessary when a fire on August 27, 1990, in Vanator Hall damaged a storage closet and the surrounding area and did extensive smoke damage to the remainder of the building. Following this fire, after much prayer and discussion, the congregation voted not only to renovate and remodel Vanator Hall, but also to remodel the Education Building and to construct an addition to join the two free-standing

buildings. Ground was broken for the project on October 6, 1991.

The Dedication Sunday celebration began with the morning worship service, during which Chaplain Eugene Beekley, a charter and current member of the congregation, gave the message, speaking on "Challenge and Opportunity." Also during this service Dr. J.D. Hamel, pastor of the Sarasota Church from 1960 to 1988 and now Pastor Emeritus, shared "retrospective remarks" and offered a prayer of thanksgiving for memorials and special gifts.

The worship service was followed by a fellowship meal in Vanator Hall,

which had been transformed by the remodeling process from a combination classroom building and meeting area into one large fellowship hall with a spacious kitchen. Mark Ray, Director of Ministries/Youth for the church, offered a prayer of celebration before the meal.

During the afternoon dedication service, Rev. Daniel Gray, pastor of the congregation, shared remarks and led the litany of dedication. Mr. Ray gave the invocation and presented special music; Dr. Hamel offered a prayer of thanksgiving; and Chaplain Beekley gave the prayer of dedication.

The celebration concluded with a Threefold Communion service in Vanator Hall, led by Pastor Gray and Mary Ray. This brought the church full circle, for the last service to be held in the Education

Building before the renovation began was Communion. The church was unable to hold a full Communion service during the year of rebuilding.

The contractor for the shell of the building was Construction Coordinators. Progressive Solutions Phil Wilson was the contractor for the completion of the interior. Members of the building committee were Tate Gabbert (chair), Wade and Betty Renneker, Bea Funkhouser, Willis Miller, Eugene Robbins, Leo Elliott, and Pastor Dan Gray.

Total cost of the project has not yet been determined, but is expected to be in the area of \$350,000 to \$400,000.

Park Street Youth Groups Host Children's Christmas Parties

Ashland, Ohio — The junior and senior high youth of the Park Street Brethren church hosted Christmas parties on Saturday, December 12, for 50 children in kindergarten through sixth grade.

The senior high youth hosted the fifth and sixth graders. Activities included making and painting dough ornaments, a JELL-O slurping contest, a Life Saver face smear, making ice cream floats, other games, and a Christmas devotional.

Senior high hosts were Sara Ditlevson, Sharon Sparks, Susan Holmes, Lena Kramer, Keith Pepsny, Emery Weaver, Megan Shultz, Leigh Icenhour, and Christy Van Duyn, with Ginny Hoyt as the assisting advisor.

The junior high youth hosted the children in kindergarten through the fourth grade. Activities included "name that Christmas carol," a funny clothes



The younger children enjoying the funny clothes relay. Photo by Emery Weaver.

relay, golf ball bowling, and (for the younger children) watching *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. The junior high youth also led a devotional and helped the children with crafts, planned by Erica Weidenhamer and Barbie Martin of the Park Street Preschool.

The junior high hosts were Jim Cunningham, Marianne Hoyt, Brian Ronk,

Mindy Waters, Jim Sparks, Emily Baker, David Pepsny, Emily Cooksey, Debbie Stoffer, Mindy Van Duyn, and Sara Sears, with John Gilmer and Youth Pastor Dave Hoyt assisting.

According to Pastor Hoyt, an attempt is being made to plan activities for the youth that develop leadership and provide opportunities for service.

St. James Church Focuses on Ordinary People On "Mission Expo Sunday" Held November 1

St. James, Md. — "God Uses Ordinary People" was the theme of "Mission Expo Sunday" held November 1 at the St. James Brethren Church.

"Mission Expo Sunday" began with a missions emphasis in Sunday school and during the morning worship services, continued with an international meal at noon and a display of missions booths, and concluded with a mission challenge in the afternoon. It also featured a "Missions Expo Posters" contest for the children of the congregation.

Rev. Mark Logan, who served as a Brethren missionary in both Argentina and Colombia, was the speaker at both the 8:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. worship services. Then during the Sunday school hour he and his wife, Chantal, spoke to some of the adults about missionary involvement, while their three children—Rebecca, John Mark, and Lawrence ("Lorenzo")—spoke to the children's classes. Doug Culler of the St. James congregation, who recently served as a short-term missionary in Papua New Guinea, also spoke to some of the adults during the Sunday school hour.

Following these services, participants reveled in a unique international meal provided by the various Sunday school classes. These classes had erected booths representing the various countries where Brethren missionaries serve, as well as booths for Papua New Guinea (where Doug Culler served) and

Brazil (where David Irving, a friend of the congregation, serves).

Class members had researched the culture and lifestyle of the peoples in these various countries and presented a flavor of these lands by means of displays. The meal featured foods representative of the various countries, including: banana fritters from Peru, carrot halva salad from India, *carbonada criolla* from Argentina, *paella valenciana* from Peru, rice pilaf from Malay-

sia, Paraguayan corn bread, coffee mousse from Colombia, coffee from Papua New Guinea (the real stuff), and more familiar, taco salad from Mexico.

Following the meal those in attendance browsed the displays, then heard a concluding challenge by Chantal Logan on the topic, "God Can use You!" The adult choir also sang for this service.

"Missions Expo Sunday" was sponsored by the Outreach Ministry of the St. James Church and was coordinated by Amanda Moore and Lindin Easterday, with many individuals in the Sunday school classes helping with the event.

—reported by Pastor Brian Moore



Ann Nave stands at the Colombian booth, one of several booths, representing all Brethren mission fields, set up by the Sunday school classes of the St. James Church.

Bethlehem Church Builds Ramp For Handicapped Worshipers

Harrisonburg, Va. — Inspired by an article in the EVANGELIST by Bonnie Munson on making the church building accessible to handicapped worshipers, ("For Lack of a Ramp!" November 1991, pp. 5-6), people of the Bethlehem Brethren Church built a ramp at the entrance to their building this past summer.

Cost of materials for the ramp and a deck at the entrance of the church building was approximately \$700. The work was done by the church people themselves. The hours spent by the different groups of workers provided opportunities for fellowship as well as a chance to learn to know and appreciate the knowledge and gifts of one another.

The ramp and deck were dedicated on Sunday, August 23, with Michelle Craver, a student at James Madison University (and daughter of Brethren Pastor Rich-



Having cut the ribbon to officially open the ramp, Michelle Craver takes a test run, while Pastor Pat Velanzon invites others to give it a try.

Photo by Pam Reese.

ard and Maxine Craver) cutting the ribbon to officially open them for use. The day was special for another reason, for the dedication followed a worship service

in which three persons were baptized.

The church now plans to add a handicapped parking area by the ramp.

— reported by Kathy Velanzon

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

God Gives Us All Things to Enjoy and Care For

What does it mean to own something or to have something belong to you?

Last summer I planted some flowers in front of my apartment. I pulled the weeds, got the soil ready, and planted my little garden. It was a lot of fun. Then I asked the neighbors on each side of me if they would like me to plant a garden for them too. I had plenty of flowers left, and I knew that they never planted a garden.

It was fun working together. Oh, I bought the flowers, I pulled the weeds, I bought the topsoil, and I dug the holes and planted the flowers in them. But it did become a neighborhood project. Children came from other apartments each day and carefully poured a few drops of water on each flower and enjoyed their beauty. Even grown-ups made helpful suggestions. But I still did the real work. Each day I made sure that each flower had enough water, that its roots were covered with soil, etc. But even though they were "my" flowers, they belonged to all of us.

One day I heard some yelling outside my window. I looked out and saw two children arguing. One was standing in the middle of the flower garden. The other was telling her that she must not stand there or she would hurt the flowers. Soon the argument centered on just whose flowers they were. After all, if they belonged to the girl standing in the middle of them, she could do whatever she wanted to do with them.

I stepped outside, laughing to myself over the silly things people fight about. I settled the argument. I told them that the flowers belonged to all of us to enjoy and, if they wanted, to help care for. But when it came to whether or not they were allowed to destroy them, they must remember that I had paid for the flowers and had done most of the work. In that sense they were my flowers. I was simply sharing them with everyone so that all who wanted to do so could enjoy them and help care for them.

Well, that settled that! In the following weeks not one person, child or adult, ever put another drop of water on even one flower. I thought to myself, "How silly it is that when people say 'mine' they mean two things: first and rightly, mine to enjoy, nurture, and receive pleasure from; secondly, mine to destroy, ruin, ignore, and abandon."

Now here's a learning activity for both children and adults. Take your Bible and read Genesis chapters 1-3. These chapters tell us that God created everything that exists. Go through these chapters and make a list of **each** thing God made. Genesis 1:28-30 and 2:4-7, 15 tell us that God gave people the right and the responsibility to take care of all these things. He didn't give us these things to abuse, but to enjoy and to care for. Now take your list and write down one thing you can do to take care of each item on the list.

Some of the things I found in these verses are listed at the right. Find them in the puzzle. You can also add these things to your list. But remember to find a way to take care of whatever God has shared with us.

Light	Other people
Air	Animals
Time	Plants
Food	Choices
Water	Leadership

F	M	T	R	G	C	A	N	I	M	A	L	S
L	E	A	D	E	R	S	H	I	P	N	T	A
Q	B	F	O	Z	A	B	Z	W	B	N	I	W
S	C	H	O	I	C	E	S	W	A	U	M	A
S	O	L	F	T	H	G	I	L	Q	A	E	T
D	N	O	T	H	E	R	P	E	O	P	L	E
A	I	R	C	M	X	B	F	C	L	R	O	R

Sarver Brethren Church Welcomes Arthur Tinkel, Jr., as Interim Pastor

Sarver, Pa. — Members and friends of the Sarver Brethren Church welcomed Rev. Arthur Tinkel, Jr., to the church on October 18 to serve as their interim pastor.

Rev. Tinkel and his wife, Dorothy Rose, came to Sarver from Intercession City, Fla., where they have lived for 13 years following retirement for health reasons. During their years in Florida, Rev. Tinkel served shortly as interim pastor for the Town and Country Brethren Church of Tampa and was also involved in several Bible classes.

Because of the shortage of pastors in The Brethren Church and the ever nearing return of Christ, and after much prayer, Rev. Tinkel let it be known that he desired to serve again as an interim pastor wherever the Lord might lead. When asked why they came to Sarver, Pastor Tinkel replied, "We didn't want to come north to the cold weather, but also felt the Lord leading us to Sarver. We only want to be where God wants us. Any sacrifice is worth being able to help the



Rev. and Mrs. Arthur Tinkel, Jr., (l.) with Sarver Moderator and Mrs. Richard Callen (r. front) and Mr. and Mrs. Chester McAfoose.

people at Sarver and furthering God's kingdom."

Pastor Tinkel believes that the role of an interim pastor is to help mend, build, and unite the congregation until a full-

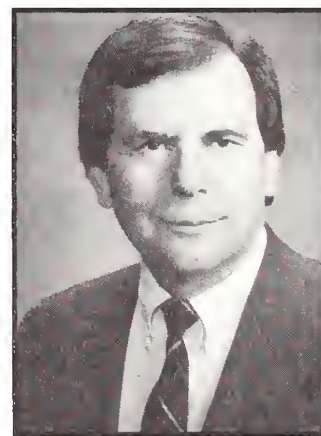
time pastor is found. He and Dorothy Rose pray that the Lord will use them in this way at Sarver.

"We appreciate the sacrifices of Pastor Art and Dorothy Rose because of their move to Sarver," said reporter Marsha Nulph. "We thank them and praise the Lord for their deep love for Him and His people. Please pray along with us that God will grant them health and strength to stay here as long as they are needed. What a beautiful example of servitude they are for all the Brethren."

— reported by Marsha Nulph

William Benz Named As New AU President

Ashland, Ohio — Dr. G. William Benz, special assistant to the president and former provost at Ohio Wesleyan Uni-



versity, has been named the new president of Ashland University.

The effective date of his appointment will be announced later.

Dr. Benz served as provost and chief academic officer at Ohio Wesleyan from 1986 to 1992. Since September he has served as special assistant to the president, focusing on long-range planning and fund-raising.

Before joining Ohio Wesleyan, he served from 1983 to 1986 as vice president for academic affairs/academic dean for Defiance College. In that position he was responsible for all academic programming, curriculum, and budget.

Prior to 1983 he served as assistant dean and adjunct professor of international studies at the University of Denver's Graduate School of International Studies, and he taught at Whitworth College in Spokane, Wash., and at Lake Forest College in Lake Forest, Ill.

Dr. Benz received his Ph.D. degree in international relations from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1970.

Dr. Benz and his wife, Geraldine, are active members of a Presbyterian Church in Delaware, Ohio, where they currently live, and Dr. Benz is a local church elder there. They are the parents of four children.

Pleasant View Brethren Decide To Do Something About Litter

Vandergrift, Pa. — We've all heard complaints about the trash that litters the sides of the highways in our country, but members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church decided to do something about the trash—particularly along the stretch of highway that leads to their church building.

Moderator Jim McGraw contacted the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to inquire whether the Pleasant View Brethren could "adopt" part of State Route 66, which is the only way to reach the church. As a result, a 3-mile section of the highway was awarded to the church. Members of the congregation cleaned up litter four times between April and the end of October.

It's reported that the Pleasant View Brethren had fun doing this community service project. People driving by would honk their horns or yell words of encouragement. One grateful lady even gave a donation to purchase soft drinks for all those working. The workers collected 135 bags of garbage, enough auto parts to build a car, and a \$10 bill that was found in the weeds (to the benefit of the Mission Board).



Pastor Keith Hensley (l.) and Moderator Jim McGraw by one of the highway signs.

The Pleasant View Brethren encourage other congregations to get involved in this kind of project. It's great publicity for your church, it brings members together in a common task, and it meets a need in the community.

— reported by Nancy McGraw

Brethren Grieve Over the Deaths of Three Members of Pastoral Family

Ashland, Ohio — Brethren across the denomination were grieved to learn of the tragic deaths of **Mrs. Anna V. Nevins** (68), **Mrs. Janice L. Nevins** (41), and **Jonathan T. Nevins** (11)—mother, wife, and son respectively of Rev. Archie Nevins, pastor of Northview Brethren Life Church, the Brethren Home Mission Church in Springboro, Ohio.

The three were killed in a vehicle accident that occurred Monday night, December 14, at the intersection of Interstates 70 and 675, northeast of

Dayton, Ohio. The family van in which they were riding hit a low cement barrier at the exit, went out of control, and plunged into a small, man-made lake by the side of the exit. Rev. Nevins and his daughter Betsy (10), who were also in the van, were able to get out of the vehicle before it sank in 15 feet of icy water. Another son, Adam (16), was not with the family at the time.

Janice and Jonathan were both members of the Northview Brethren Life Church. Mrs. Anna Nevins lived in Martinsburg, Pa.

Services for the three were held Friday, December 18, at the Christian Church in Springboro, with Rev. Robert Westfall, pastor of the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, First Brethren Church, officiating. The church was full to overflowing with friends of the Nevins family, including members and friends from the Northview Brethren Life Church, people from other Brethren churches in the area, most of the Ohio Brethren pastors, many of the Brethren pastors from Indiana, and several from other states.

A second service was also held for Mrs. Anna Nevins in Pennsylvania on December 20.

Memorial contributions, which will be used for funeral expenses, may be sent to the national Missionary Board.

In Memory

Margaret E. Lowery, 82, Brethren Home Missionary who served for more than 35 years in Krypton, Kentucky, as director of the Krypton

Bible Center, died December 5 at the Colton Villa Nursing Home, where she had been living since her retirement in 1990.

Born January 30, 1910, in Washington County, Md., she joined the St. James Brethren Church at



the age of 12. She was a 1928 graduate of Hagerstown High School and a 1930 graduate of Towson State Normal School. She taught in the public schools of Washington County for 14 years while continuing her education at Western Maryland College, Madison College (B.S. degree in elementary ed. in 1939), and Duke University (graduate studies). In 1943 she entered the Washington County Hospital School of Nursing and became a registered nurse in 1947.

During those years she was very active in the St. James Brethren Church and in The Brethren Church at the district and denominational level. She was also involved in community activities.

Believing that she was called to mission service, she moved to Ashland, Ohio, to do mission studies at Ashland College and Ashland Theological Seminary. While in Ashland she worked as both nurse and nursing instructor at Samaritan Hospital.

Upon completion of her mission studies in 1953, she began mission service in eastern Kentucky. While the main thrust of her work was in youth development through Sunday schools, VBS, camping, 4-H, and scouting, she served the people literally from birth to burial. She nursed the sick, took over household duties for families with illness or bereavement, distributed food and clothing to the needy, and served as a Christian

counselor and friend to the mountain community.

During her years of service she received numerous awards and honors. The Blue Grass Council of Boy Scouts of America, representing 53 Kentucky counties, presented her the Silver Beaver Award for outstanding volunteer service to scouting. The Chamber of Commerce of Hazard and Perry Counties along with several civic organizations named her their 1984 Woman of the Year. She was recognized as the Outstanding Senior Citizen of The Brethren Church in 1977. And she was awarded the Towson State University Distinguished Alumni Award and the National 4-H Alumni Key Award.

The funeral service for Margaret was held December 9 at the St. James Brethren Church, with Rev. Brian Moore, pastor of the St. James Church, and Rev. James Sluss, a former associate of Margaret in Krypton, officiating. The graveside service was by Rev. Moore, Rev. Sluss, and Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church.

A memorial has been established in Miss Lowery's name for the training of future missionaries. Contributions may be sent to the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church.

Miss Leona M. Real, 81, December 16. Longtime member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church, where she was financial secretary for many years, served on various committees, and was a member of the Woman's Missionary Society. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

Lula Copp, 83, December 14. Longtime member of the Maurertown Brethren Church and the Woman's Missionary Society. Services by Rev. Wendell Shurtz and Pastor Richard Craver.

Grace Weidenhamer, 84, December 4. Longtime member and deaconess at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where she had also served as superintendent of the Sunday school junior department. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer and Dr. J. Ray Klingensmith. Mrs. Weidenhamer was the mother of Brethren elder Rev. Bradley Weidenhamer (Ashland Theological Seminary librarian).

Edna Kerr, 103, November 30. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer.

Chester More, 88, November 28. Member for 13 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Galen Sluss, 87, November 27. Active member for many years of first the Louisville First Brethren Church and then of the Brethren Bible Church of Louisville. Services by Rev. Arthur Hess, relative of the deceased, and Rev. Jim Ray, pastor of the Louisville Brethren Bible Church. Mr. Sluss was the father of Brethren pastor Rev. James Sluss.

Ralph Powers, 77, November 26. Member for 54 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Mrs. Jane E. Bevers, 62, November 18. Services by Rev. Paul Tinkel, pastor of the Milford First Brethren Church. Mrs. Bevers was the mother of Brethren elder Rev. Kenneth Madison (U.S. Army Chaplain).

Goldenaires

Rev. Herbert and Evelyn Gilmer, 55th, February 24. Members of the Center Chapel Brethren Church. (Address: 111½ W. Columbia St., S. Whitley, IN 46787.)

Arthur and Betty Carpenter, 50th, December 20. Members of the Ardmore First Brethren Church.

Raymond and Wilda Knapp, 50th, May 30, 1992. Members of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

Weddings

Donelle Craft to Gregory Humbarger, December 5, at the Flora First Brethren Church; Pastor Alvin Grumblin officiating. Bride a member of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Phyllis Westafer to Harold Baker, November 19, in Sarasota, Fla.; Rev. Dan Gray, pastor of the Sarasota First Brethren Church, officiating. Members of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Jean Marie Troup to Robert Scott Hartman, October 10, in McLean, Va. Bride a member of the Meadow Crest (Ft. Wayne, Ind.) Brethren Church and former assistant to the editor of the EVANGELIST.

Membership Growth

Vinco: 3 by baptism

Oak Hill: 5 by baptism

South Bend: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

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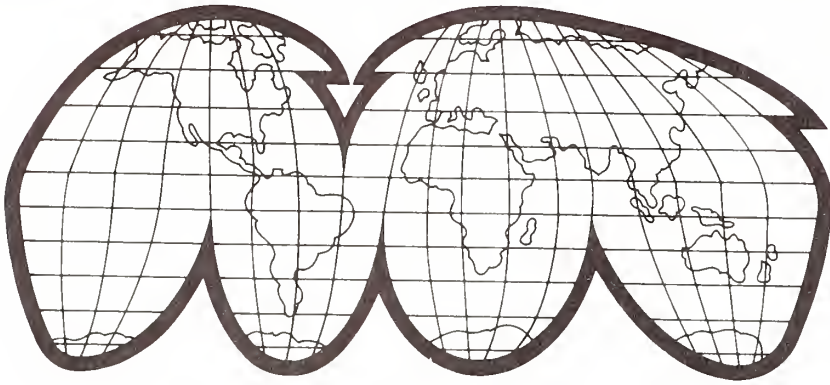
FEBRUARY 1993



New Sanctuary of the Gretna Brethren Church

See page 16

Developing a Global Vision



Dead Right

AFTER SUPPER, the host family and their guests moved to the living room. The conversation somehow turned to the excesses of certain Pentecostals in South America.

The group refuted these believers' ideas that sickness denotes a lack of faith, or that God *has* to give you something if you "claim" it in faith.

For awhile, everyone refuted off-center extravagances of these fellow Christians. But then the conversation paused, and one man said thoughtfully, "You know, I wonder if we're being too critical. I wonder if, in the Lord's eyes, it's better to make some mistakes out of enthusiasm to serve Him, than it is to be dead in our orthodoxy."

Correct doctrine; no zeal

Another pause, and heads around the room slowly began to nod. Yes, we North American evangelicals may know our Bibles and profess orthodox beliefs, but we aren't always known for our zeal. That is, we are correct in doctrine, but often we are cold in our *practice* of Christianity. Or to put it more bluntly, we are "dead right."

We read *Christianity Today* and *THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST*. We know how to use a concordance. We attend worship services and tithe. We fulfill all the externals.

But somehow, for some reason, our spiritual fires burn low. Often our zeal runs on empty. Our faith becomes like an engine without gasoline, a computer without a hard drive, a flashlight without batteries.

We can interpret a Scripture passage, give its historical context, and possibly even tell what it meant in the original Greek or Hebrew. But when it comes to radically applying that text in our daily lives, that's another matter.

We read books on prayer. We send out prayer letters. We go to prayer meetings. But as for actually praying, well . . . (In contrast, many believers in the Third World think it normal to have regular all-night prayer vigils.)

We receive evangelism training. We know the Four Spiritual Laws and Evangelism Explosion techniques. And, in our heads, we know the plan of salvation. But when it comes to sharing spiritual truth with a next-door neighbor, we find that hard or—worse—unimportant.

We can debate and smugly reject the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons at our doorsteps. Then we cling to our right doctrine at home and leave the door-to-door witness to the sects.

Weakening tradition?

I thank God for our rich evangelical tradition in the United States and for the way He has used our country as a missionary sending base. But as any professional football coach will say, "You can't rest on your laurels."

Probably more than we know, the evangelical church in the U.S. is being affected by an increasingly secular and materialistic society. The emphases on competition, comfort, me-first, numbers, and build-

ings influence even the church. Without even realizing it, we accommodate our faith to the prevailing culture.

"Our faith becomes like an engine without gasoline, a computer without a hard drive, a flashlight without batteries."

Around the world, Christians still hold the North American church in general high esteem—especially believers in developing countries whose churches sprang from the tireless labors of pioneer U.S. missionaries.

But that opinion may be changing. "Next time, send us someone more spiritual," a Colombian pastor told a U.S. mission agency who sent a missionary lasting only one term.

After the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and the opening of doors to missionary outreach there, many U.S. agencies and workers poured in. Praise God for that. But there are rumblings that missionaries from the U.S. aren't always well-received.

One Latin theologian wrote recently that Latin American, not U.S., missionaries should go first to Eastern Europe. "It would be tragic," he wrote, "if the Marxist vacuum were filled with decadent Western religiosity."

Reality check

Maybe it's time that we all take a reality check—a spiritual "gut check," as it were. Are we merely hearers of the word, or are we also doers? Are we just going through the motions? Or do our hearts throb with a fresh, daily, and meaningful relationship with God?

Instead of packing up for a guilt trip, let's pray for a fresh touch from God. After all, God *wants* us to burn hot for Him. And this zeal comes from Him: "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose," Paul wrote in Philippians.

Instead of being "dead right," let's be dead serious about our relationship and service for Christ in 1993. [†]

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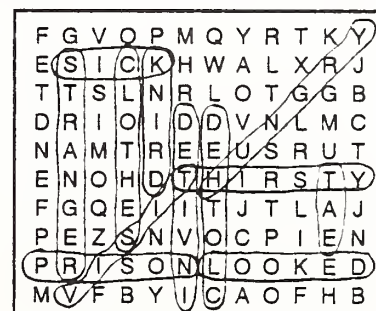
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Cover: Exterior and interior views of the new sanctuary of the Gretna Brethren Church, Bellefontaine, Ohio. The pictures were taken by Byron Scott, photographer for *The Bellefontaine Examiner*, and are used courtesy of that newspaper.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

1. hungry, eat.
2. thirsty, drink.
3. stranger, invited.
4. clothes, clothed.
5. sick, looked.
6. prison, visit.





Are We Passing On the Promise?

Second in a series of four articles on The Brethren Church's
"Priorities for the Nineties" — by Ronald W. Waters.

Priority 2 — Sharing Our Faith (Passing On the Promise): to burden, stimulate, and equip persons to share the good news of Jesus Christ through both words and actions through local church implementation of the Passing On the Promise outreach process, leading to Brethren people sharing their faith in a lifestyle of friendship evangelism.

THE ONE TERM that strikes fear in the hearts of Christians and non-Christians alike is evangelism. Yet, Jesus charged the early believers (and us) with the task of spreading the Good News about salvation through Him.

A Definition of Evangelism

During the 1970s, the theology and the strategy working groups of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization were formulating a working definition for evangelism. John R. W. Stott, chair of the theology group, proposed this definition:

The nature of evangelization is the communication of the Good News.

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

The denominational priorities being discussed in this series of articles were adopted by the 1992 General Conference.

The purpose of evangelization is to give individuals a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ. The goal of evangelization is the persuading of men and women to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and serve Him in the fellowship of His Church.¹

This definition provides an excellent three-point outline for the process of evangelism.

The nature of evangelism

First, the *nature* of evangelism is to pass on a faith that has content—it is Good News about the living Word of God, our saving Lord, Jesus Christ (John 1:1-14). What we know about Jesus as the living Word, we find recorded in the written word, the Bible.

From our earliest days in Germany in the 1700s, Brethren have placed a high premium on Jesus Christ as the center of faith. And we have believed that a faith worth having is a faith worth demonstrating in daily living. Trust and obey, believing and doing, faith and faithfulness—all describe the two-pronged Brethren approach to the Christian faith/life.

Early Brethren were staunch

¹Quoted in *Strategies for Church Growth* by C. Peter Wagner, published by Regal Books.

defenders of their faith, both in speaking and in writing. And they believed that the living out of that faith was equally important to communicating what they believed.

The purpose of evangelism

According to Stott's definition, the *purpose* of evangelism is "to give individuals a valid opportunity to accept Jesus Christ." Hearing the Good News is not enough; it must lead to an opportunity to respond to that message.

Somewhere in history, we lost the emphasis on the verbal part of the proclamation. We came to believe that if we lived our faith in a consistent way, people would see a difference in our lives and be drawn to the faith. There is some truth in that assumption—our actions speak volumes to not-yet-believers. But without words to explain the reason for our way of living, they probably won't embrace the faith solely by observing our lives.

Brethren communicate the Good News through a combination of faith-filled actions which demonstrate the life of faith accompanied by faith-filled words that explain its message. This does not mean you or I must become clones of Billy Graham. It does mean we

should "be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15). That "hope" may be expressed in a testimony of what Jesus means in my life along with a simple explanation of how one may come to saving faith in Him.

The goal of evangelism

Finally, the *goal* of evangelism "is the persuading of men and women to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and serve Him in the fellowship of His Church."

It is not enough to hear the Good News or even to have a valid opportunity to respond. A person is not evangelized until two things happen: he/she (1) accepts Jesus Christ personally as saving Lord, and (2) is incorporated into a life of discipleship through a local church.

In this article the terms "evangelism" and "evangelization" have been used interchangeably. In technical usage, the latter term is replacing the more familiar "evangelism" for very good reason. For too many, "evangelism" means simply sowing the seeds of faith—sharing the Good News with only limited concern about the results. "Evangelization" is an all-encompassing term that sees evangelism as a process. That process begins where the not-yet-believer is and attempts to move that person to a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

But evangelization does not stop there. The process continues through the rest of the new believer's life, helping that person become an authentic disciple of Christ and a responsible member of his church.

Passing On the Promise

In the late 1980s, the General Conference Evangelism Committee and its successor, the Evangelism & Church Growth Commission, searched for ways to stimulate local congregations and individuals to more effectively share their faith. That search resulted in dis-

covery of Passing On the Promise (POtP), developed and implemented by the Church of the Brethren. The commission has recommended POtP for use by Brethren churches toward fulfillment of Priority 2.

Passing On the Promise is a 36-month process through which persons and congregations discover new ways to share the gospel, work for growth, and deepen their own discipleship. Passing On the Promise encourages both individuals and congregations to:

- Reach out and care for the needs of persons;
- Invite persons to discover Christ and the fellowship of the church;
- Include persons more deeply in the life and ministry of the congregation;
- Challenge believers to grow in Christian discipleship and faithful witness.

Components of the process

Passing On the Promise includes several components:

1. An **Evangelism Leaders Academy** offered annually to equip pastors and lay leaders for more effective biblical evangelism. Other members of the local church are invited to attend as well.

2. **Evangelism discovery events** during the first six months of the process help congregations gain a new vision for, and fresh perspective on, outreach and congregational growth.

3. A **friendship evangelism emphasis** introduces persons to non-threatening ways they can give personal witness to their faith.

4. A **congregational self-study**, conducted early in the process, helps congregations uncover new possibilities for evangelism and growth.

5. Four **Bible study/action units** provide the basis for an annual growth workshop where needs are identified and action plans are developed.

6. **Mutual support and accountability** are provided among

participating congregations for networking and encouragement.

Passing On the Promise is certainly not the only way a church can be involved in evangelization. Several Brethren churches are showing steady growth—a possible indication of an effective outreach strategy. Very few Brethren churches, however, are having dramatic growth.

Often, even in growing churches, faith-sharing is done on a regular and intentional basis by perhaps only the pastor and a few others. The Passing On the Promise process is designed to expand on that outreach by giving a larger number of persons in the congregation the tools and motivation to join in the task of being witnesses to their faith.

Unfortunately, the majority of our churches are remaining static or are declining in attendance and membership. This may indicate that the pastor and church members are not being intentional about evangelism or that the methods being used are ineffective. Passing On the Promise will help these churches receive a new vision for the mission of outreach and will equip them to become involved effectively in faith-sharing.

This spring, many churches are declaring their commitment to participate in Passing On the Promise. If your church has not already decided to participate, encourage your pastor, evangelism committee, church board, and the congregation as a whole to make this commitment. Perhaps offering to serve in a leadership role for Passing On the Promise will lead to an affirmative decision.

And when Passing On the Promise begins in your congregation, take an active part in the various training opportunities offered. You will learn how to more effectively share the Good News, and you will experience the joy of introducing not-yet-believers to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Soon you, too, will be able to say, "I'm Passing On the Promise." [†]

How Two Churches Became One

On January 3, 1993, the Waterloo, Iowa, First Brethren Church merged with the City Church of the Brethren in Waterloo to become the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Ronald L. Waters recounts the background and process of that merger.

THE WATERLOO, Iowa, First Brethren Church was born in 1883. From 1883 to 1992 the congregation worshiped in three successive buildings. For the majority of those years, services were held in a building located at the corner of West Sixth and Wellington Streets. This building was described in the pages of a 1914 issue of *THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST* as the most beautiful in the brotherhood.

For a number of years the congregation recognized the need to make this beautiful and historic building more easily accessible for the elderly and handicapped. When the building was constructed in 1913, little consideration was given to these special needs.

Various solutions to this problem were explored. A ramp was considered, but it would have needed to be so long that it was judged impractical. An elevator would have required an expensive addition to the building. On several occasions relocation was considered, but emotional attachment to the building was so strong that the only result was heated dialogue.

The issue resurfaces

Recently, as a result of several circumstances, the accessibility issue resurfaced. So in early 1992 a Search Committee was formed to explore feasible solutions to the problem. After much study, discussion, and prayer, this committee presented six options to the congregation last April: (1) remodel the building; (2) build a new build-

ing elsewhere; (3) purchase and remodel an existing building; (4) merge with another congregation of like mind; (5) share a building with another congregation; and (6) continue as is.

The congregation rejected option six and instructed the Search Committee to investigate each of the remaining options. The members wanted more specific information about each option, including the estimated cost to repair and maintain the present building for the next five to ten years.

An unexpected phone call

While this information was being gathered, the "grapevine" was busy. Rev. Gene Burry, the pastor of the City Church of the Brethren in Waterloo, learned what we were doing and called to ask if we were serious about a merger. His congregation was also facing a dilemma, but of a different kind.

In 1962 the City Church had built a facility (for the most part handicapped-accessible) capable of holding about 250 people comfortably. But because of company layoffs in Waterloo, a number of the church families had moved away, and the congregation had dwindled to around 80 members (with an average attendance of 50 to 60). As a result, the congregation was struggling financially. This church,



The beautiful building at the corner of Sixth and Wellington Streets in Waterloo served the First Brethren congregation for nearly 80 years.

too, might be willing to consider a merger.

Following his phone call, Rev. Burry and I met for some initial discussions. Then the lay people of both congregations met to discuss how such a merger would be structured and how each congregation would be affected.

Last June the First Brethren congregation was given information about each of the five options under consideration. As this information was discussed, it became clear that the most feasible option was a merger. So the Search Committee was instructed to explore the possibility and structure of a merger with the City Church of the Brethren.

An invitation to merge

Then in July, the City Church voted to invite First Brethren to join them in Christian ministry,

Rev. Waters was pastor of the Waterloo, Iowa, First Brethren Church and is now co-pastor of the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

"Without a doubt, this is the most difficult decision this congregation has ever been asked to make. Nevertheless, we are now eagerly looking ahead in anticipation of God's plans for the future."

using their building on Hammond Avenue as the church home. Our congregation had several meetings in which we discussed this matter at length and during which we prayed fervently for God's leading.

Then on September 13 our congregation held a special business meeting in which to make a decision on this matter. A 12-hour prayer vigil preceded the gathering.

The meeting began with a time of sharing information and answering questions, which lasted for two hours. Then the vote was taken. The 91-percent vote in favor of the merger was a confirmation to us that we were in the will of God. What had seemed the least likely and least desired option at the beginning had become a reality.

A series of open doors

From September 13 until the end of the year, many meetings were held, much sleep lost, and much grief and apprehension experienced as we prepared for the merger. But as we moved forward, God kept opening the doors for us to step through.

One of the biggest of these was the sale of our building — for \$65,000 to an African-American congregation in need of a place of worship. This was an answer to

About the Church

The Hammond Avenue Brethren Church is a "federated" or cooperative congregation. It will maintain affiliations with both the Church of the Brethren and The Brethren Church and support both denominations at the national and district levels. At least for the present, separate membership lists will be kept of Church of the Brethren and Brethren Church members, primarily for determining national and district "fair share" support. The pastors of the two former congregations are now serving as co-pastors of the Hammond Avenue Church. The church name was chosen by vote of the members of both former congregations.



In addition to being more handicapped-accessible, the church building on Hammond Avenue is located in a newer area of Waterloo. The area in which the former First Brethren Church building is located has deteriorated in recent years.

prayer, as we wanted the building to continue as a place where Christ would be honored and served.

While the members of Waterloo First Brethren are at peace about all that has taken place, their emotional agony nevertheless continues. Many of them were carried into this building as babies, were dedicated, baptized, and married here, and they in turn dedicated their own children here. A number have also had funerals for loved ones in this building.

Without a doubt, this is the most difficult decision this congregation has ever been asked to make. Nevertheless, we are now eagerly looking ahead in anticipation of God's plans for the future.

Our final worship service

Our last worship service in this beautiful and beloved building was held on Sunday, December 27, 1992. Every effort was put forth to make this a time of praise, not of grief. The service was designed to be a time of worship and remembering.

The first half-hour was a traditional time of worship, with the theme "A Time to Trust," in remembrance of Jesus' reluctance to go to the cross but His yielding to the will of the Father. This period

of worship concluded with special music by nine members of the pastor's family.

Then my son, Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, brought greetings from the National Office, shared some personal memories, and issued a challenge to the congregation to continue in faithfulness to Christ and The Brethren Church, and also to work with the Church of the Brethren in ministry.

Next an honor roll of the faithful was read. Many lay people, some deceased and others still living, were remembered for their contribution to the ministry of First Brethren through the years. Charles Brown was presented a plaque in appreciation for his faithfulness in opening and closing the building since the early 1970s.

Then those people who had been called into Christian vocations from this congregation were remembered. Their names were read and a brief update of their present activities was shared.

During the 109-year history of this congregation, 35 men served it as full-time or interim pastor. Two of these, W.H. Beachler and I, served the congregation for two separate pastorates. Of the 34 former pastors, only James R.

Black, Glenn Grumbling, and Lynn Mercer are living. Each of these sent a written or cassette message, and these were shared during the service.

Members and friends of the congregation also shared memories of past experiences at the church. Some of these were humorous, others serious.

To conclude the service, Russell Stephens sang "Bless This House," after which we in the congregation joined hands in a time of commitment to our new ministry, while singing "Bless Be the Tie That Binds." We then prayed together the "Lord's Prayer" to conclude the service.

Thus we concluded the era of services at the beautiful, cherished building on the corner of West Sixth and Wellington Streets. But we took with us many precious memories that shall always be an important part of our history.

The merger formalized

On Sunday, January 3, 1993, a historic event took place at 1604 Hammond Avenue in Waterloo. Despite very icy streets, 146 people gathered for the first Sunday school session and worship service of the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Following a traditional opening, Jack Meyers representing the congregation of the City Church of the Brethren formally invited the congregation of the First Brethren Church to join them in Christian ministry. LeRoy Lamb formally accepted this invitation on behalf of the First Brethren congregation.

The mayor of Waterloo, Al Manning, brought greetings and wished us success in the merger and in our efforts to reach people for Jesus Christ in Waterloo. He then cut a ribbon symbolizing the beginning of the Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Pastor Gene Burry led the congregation in vows of commitment to unity and faithfulness to Christ and the church. Following this, the new church choir sang "Wonderful Grace of Jesus."

I continued the service with a message of challenge for a balanced ministry of congregational nurture and of outreach in the community and around the world.

Thus began this new venture of faith and of service to the Lord. Please pray for us, that we will have a smooth transition and develop a ministry that will bring honor and glory to Jesus Christ. [†]

The Christian Fellowship Baptist Church

The First Brethren Church building at the corner of West Sixth and Wellington Streets was purchased by the Christian Fellowship Baptist Church, an African-American congregation that had worshiped in the Waterloo YWCA since September of 1991. This congregation of approximately 135 members held its opening celebration at its new church home on January 10, 1993. Rev. Ronald L. Waters was invited to take part in the service. He shares this account.

This was an interesting and edifying service, to say the least. It began at 4 p.m. and concluded a little after 7 p.m. At least 15 different clergy persons

spoke, each for ten minutes or less. There were five choirs and individuals who sang one or more numbers. When the offering was received, the ushers stood at the front of the sanctuary and the people filed past them with their offering. Even those in the balcony did so.

The crowd fluctuated from about 100 to 300 or more. Several of our members attended, and some attended the smorgasbord that was provided. They were well-received and enjoyed a very delicious meal.

It was a great experience, very interesting, inspirational, and noisy. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

A Significant Day in The Brethren Church

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

JANUARY 14 was a significant day in The Brethren Church. On that day two new missionary couples — Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles — made their long-awaited journey to Mexico to begin their missionary service in that country. And on that day missionary candidate Mark Baker went home from the hospital following a 37-day stay and a miraculous recovery from a severe illness.

Four New Missionaries

THE JOURNEY of the four new missionaries to Mexico was not without its difficulties. Their flight from Cleve-

land to the Dallas-Fort Worth airport was delayed by more than an hour, meaning they might miss their next flight to Mexico City. Fortunately, Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda, Director for Latin America Ministries for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, was awaiting them at Dallas-Fort Worth to accompany them to Mexico.

Juan informed American Airlines (the carrier to Mexico City) of the situation and asked the airline to do what it could to hold up the flight until the four additional passengers arrived. Thanks to Juan's and the airline's efforts, Tim, Jan, Todd, and Tracy made the flight.

Unfortunately, their luggage didn't and had to be sent on a later plane.

In Mexico City, the five were met by several members of The Brethren Church in Mexico City, including Pastor Moises Calderón and two Mexican seminary students, Daniel and Ramón, who are training to be church planters to work in team ministry with the four missionaries. After several hours spent visiting with the Mexican Brethren and in discussions with Juan, the four missionaries were picked up by a van which took them to the city of Cuernavaca (about an hour from Mexico City). This is the location of the language school



Todd and Tracy Ruggles (l.) and Jan and Tim Eagle on the patio of the home in which the Eagles are staying during language training.

where they are spending several months in intensive study of Spanish.

While at the language school, the two couples are living in the homes of Mexican families (each couple with a separate family). Since these families speak very little English, the new missionaries are forced to use Spanish. In these homes they are also receiving daily exposure to Mexican life and culture. At the conclusion of their language training, they will move to Mexico City to begin their work with the church.

A Miraculous Recovery

MARK BAKER'S 37-day stay in the hospital began on Tuesday, December 8, when he entered Goshen (Indiana) General Hospital complaining of dizziness and suffering with lung congestion. That night he began coughing up blood, and Wednesday morning he was moved into the hospital's intensive care unit. By Wednesday night his condition had so deteriorated that the doctor said that, barring a miracle, he would not live.

In the next several hours this word was spread throughout the denomination, and Brethren (along with many other concerned Christians), who had already been praying for Mark, began to do so with even greater earnestness.

On Friday Mark was transferred by helicopter to the Indiana University Medical Center in Indianapolis, where more sophisticated treatment could be given and a specialist was available to examine Mark. But for the next few days the only positive note in the reports of Mark's condition was that he was still alive.

Then reports began to contain a note of guarded optimism. The fact that he had hung on to life this long was in it-

self reason for hope. Prayers were being answered; a miracle was in the making! Even so Mark's life was still in the balances. Even a slight turn for the worse could mean death.

At this time, Mark was kept in a medically induced coma, lest any movement on his part further reduce the low level of oxygen in his blood and otherwise interfere with treatment. He remained in this state until Saturday, December 19, when he was allowed to regain consciousness. Even so, it was Tues-

day before he became fully coherent and aware of the severity of his illness.

During the period that he was in a coma, a name was put on his illness: Wegener's disease (*Pulmonary Wegener's Granulomatosis*). While the cause of this disease is not known, the method of treatment is. Once Mark's condition was diagnosed and treatment was begun, he began the slow process of recovery. By Christmas, while Mark was still very ill, there was at least reason for optimism.

Mark continued to improve ever so slowly during the last week of December and the first week of January. He experienced a minor setback on January 11, when it was necessary to remove his gall bladder (a casualty of the physical ordeal he had been through). Nevertheless, by January 14 the doctor thought he was well enough to go home.

Ironically, January 14 was to have been a far different day for Mark. On that day he, too, was to have departed for missionary service, not in Mexico, but in Russia. Mark had traveled to Russia last July (see "An Unfinished Journey to Russia" in the October 1992 issue of the *EVANGELIST*), and as a result of that trip had experienced a call to return to that country as a missionary. He planned to spend at least a year in the former Soviet Union training teachers and administrators there how to teach innovative courses on Judeo-Christian principles in the public schools of those countries.

Though Mark is now at home, he was still so weak by the end of January that he could do little more than walk short distances in the house. And though he needs to eat in order to gain strength and weight, he finds it difficult to do so because of poor appetite and his weakness. He faces a long period of recuperation.

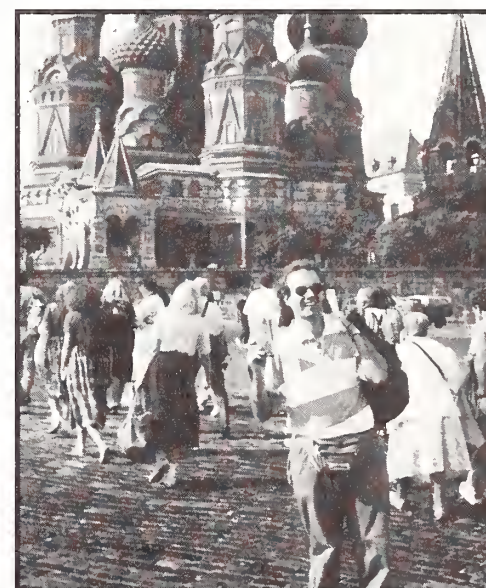
Nevertheless, he is optimistic about a full recovery and continues to believe that God is calling him to Russia, where he plans to go as soon as he is medically able. In the meantime, he plans to return to his former position as a buyer/manager for Bethel Publishing Company as soon as he is well enough to do so.

He had resigned from this position effective in December, in preparation for going to Russia. But his employers tore up his resignation when they learned of his illness and are keeping his position open for him.

Many Prayers Answered

YES, JANUARY 14 was a significant day in The Brethren Church. This day saw the answers to many prayers — many months of prayers for Tim and Jan and for Todd and Tracy during their time of training and missionary candidacy; and many days of intense prayer for Mark's recovery. Thanks be to God who answered those prayers by placing four new missionaries in Mexico and by bringing about a miraculous recovery in the life of another missionary candidate!

But let us not grow weary in our praying. Let us continue to pray for Tim and Jan and for Todd and Tracy. Let us pray for their health and well-being; that they



Mark Baker (foreground) during his first trip to Russia in July 1992.

will adjust quickly to a new culture and environment; that they will learn Spanish rapidly; and that they will be able to minister effectively to the spiritual needs of the Mexican people. And let us pray as well for the quick and complete recovery of Mark, and that he, too, will be able to fulfill his call to missionary service. [†]

Power Struggles and the Pastor's Role in the Church

By Larry R. Baker

I HAVE BEEN PROCESSING these thoughts for several months and write them out of a background of 20 years of pastoral experience, as well as other experience in youth and Christian education ministry. This past summer I celebrated my 15th year as pastor of the South Bend First Brethren Church.

In the years that I have been in South Bend, many pastors have come and gone in the Indiana District. Some churches have changed pastors four to six times in the years that South Bend and I have ministered together.

Many times the changes were not easy. There was "fallout" in the surrounding community, and any ministry that had been accomplished in the previous couple of years was left in shambles. Sometimes congregations split. More than one pastor left The Brethren Church for another denomination.

The pastor's role

From my point of view, many of these "power struggles" between the pastor and some members of the congregation were a direct result of how the pastor's role was perceived by himself and by some members of the church.

Most pastors have gifts of leadership and have honed those skills with advanced training. They have worked in local churches, read books, and taken courses on how to organize, program, and build the church. Although some may have

delusions of grandeur, most just want to build the Kingdom of God. Add to these truths the fact that The Brethren Church *Manual of Procedure*, the district constitution, and most local church constitutions give the office of elder or pastor in The Brethren Church great responsibility and authority in the local congregation.

The pastor as chaplain

In some congregations the pastor is neither expected nor allowed to exercise this responsibility and authority. He is viewed as an employee of the congregation with "chaplain" responsibilities. He is not expected to coordinate and/or lead the programs, finances, and the outreach of the church, or to equip members for ministry. He is to perform ministry as his employers instruct and allow him to perform it.

Many times he is expected to make the church grow using strategies and methods that were effective 40 years ago, but which have little impact or produce few results in today's society. He is viewed (as Lyle Schaller puts it) as a "medicine man" rather than as a "tribal chief." This congregational attitude can frustrate and discourage a pastor who wants to do everything possible to enable the congregation to grow.

Some pastors, on the other hand, may misuse their authority, or they may not respond well to criticism or to ideas that differ from their own. Instead of trying to work out a situation, they may appear to be saying, "It's my way or the highway!" They are the ones who usually end up on the highway!

My counsel in these situations is to know yourself as a congregation and as a pastor. Are you a con-

gregation that basically wants a "chaplain" or a "medicine man" whom you can direct on what to do and how to do it? If so, it probably wouldn't be wise for you to call a pastor who is a strong leader and administrator, who has definite ideas on how to build a church in the 1990s. You had better seek a pastor who has gifts in the areas of counseling, mercy, and helps.

On the other hand, congregations that desire more rapid growth and outreach probably need to seek pastors who have the gifts of leadership and administration.

Pastors, likewise, need to be aware of their gift complement as they seek a church in which to serve God. They need to be aware of what kind of pastor a congregation is seeking. They must also be true to their calling and gifts, so that neither they nor the congregation will be frustrated.

When mismatches occur

If a mismatch does occur (and they will), everything possible needs to be done by both the congregation and the pastor to prevent the situation from getting ugly. The Pastoral and Congregational Care representative and the District Elder need to be contacted and their counsel sought.

If possible the situation needs to be worked out in such a way that both the congregation and the pastor are challenged to grow from the experience and to bring glory to God. If a solution cannot be found, then an agreement to disagree needs to be made in love, with as few repercussions as possible.

Remember, the world is watching us. Jesus put it this way: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, *NIV*). [†]

Rev. Baker is pastor of the South Bend, Ind., First Brethren Church.

This article initially appeared as an editorial in Brethren Need to Know, the Indiana District newsletter, of which Rev. Baker is co-editor. It is used here by permission.

Practicing Random Acts of Kindness

By Victor M. Parachin



ONE SUMMER DAY former President George Bush invited members of the press corps and their families to Kennebunkport for a barbecue. Among those present was Jack Gallivan, a director of ABC's *Primetime Live* program, and his young daughter Katie. The little girl joined other children swimming in the Bushes' pool.

Before long the President noticed that Katie was in tears, and he asked her what was wrong. Katie told the President that while swimming, a tooth — loose for several days — had come out and was lost in the pool. The President knew from his own children and grandchildren what that meant: no tooth to place under a pillow for the Tooth Fairy.

President Bush excused himself, then returned in a moment with a Presidential note card bearing an etching of his Kennebunkport house. On it he made a small x and wrote: "Dear Tooth Fairy, Katie's tooth came out where the x is. It really did — I promise. George Bush."

Of course, that simple, spontaneous, and exquisite act dried a little girl's tears, bringing her instant joy. Such is the power of kindness.

The world needs kindness

The world is always in need of more people who will practice random acts of kindness. Kindness has a way of softening life's harsh blows and of pushing back the clouds to let the sun shine through. It makes bearable what otherwise would be unbearable.

Rev. Parachin is a pastor and freelance writer who lives in Virginia Beach, Va.

That is why the Bible emphasizes the importance of kindness: "be kind and tender-hearted to one another . . ." (Eph. 4:32, *TEV*). In another passage St. Paul makes it clear that kindness should be a part of every Christian's life: "the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness . . ." (Gal. 5:22, *TEV*).

Consider the impact of a random act of kindness upon British hostage Terry Waite. During his fourth year of confinement, discouragement was giving way to despair. At just the right moment a guard came informing Waite that a post card had arrived for him.

Amazingly, a woman he didn't know decided to purchase a card and mail it to Waite. The only address she wrote was "Terry Waite, Beirut, Lebanon." Equally amazing was the fact that her card reached the hostage. Her message was a simple, pure reminder that he had not been forgotten: "We remember. We shall continue to pray for you and to work for all people detained around the world."

That act of kindness from someone he had never met lifted Waite's spirits tremendously. After his release, Waite cited that note as bearing a vital message of hope for him. He told reporters: "Never despise those simple actions. Something, somewhere will get through — as it got through to me."

The boomerang effect

Perhaps one of the finest aspects about practicing random acts of kindness is the boomerang effect those actions create. The good you do comes back to you. "Kindness begets kindness," wrote Sophocles.

And the Bible notes: "You do your-

self a favor when you are kind" (Prov. 11:17, *TEV*). It is impossible to do a random act of kindness without feeling better yourself.

Kindness at work

A good example is the writer Edna St. Vincent Millay. A shy, sensitive woman, she found herself very unhappy when she moved to New York City after graduating from Vassar College. The cold indifference of large city life left her both discouraged and lonely. Letters to her mother reflected St. Vincent Millay's gloomy mood.

Fortunately, St. Vincent Millay transformed urban life around her by reaching out to people with random acts of kindness. In so doing, her own living improved, as is evident in this excerpt from a later letter to her mother:

It's such fun to treat people as if they were human beings just like yourself. *They always like it and come right back at you with it.* I picked up a spilled bundle for a woman the other day — her arms were so full she could hardly bend — and carried it for a couple of blocks. She blessed me as if I were an angel, kept saying how kind it was — and that it was things like this, happening once or twice in a lifetime, that made life worth living.

When all is said and done, we say many words and do many deeds for which we may be sorry. But no one is ever sorry for having committed random acts of kindness. [†]



Having the Heart of the Lord

By Ronald W. Waters

ONE OF MY most dearly loved passages of scripture is Luke 15. In it Jesus reveals the heart of God as He tells three stories about lost things. A shepherd discovers that one of his 100 sheep is missing. A woman loses one of ten silver coins. And the younger son of a father takes his share of the estate and runs as far away from home as possible and is lost to his father.

What action does each person take in response to the lost object/person? The shepherd goes out into the dangerous night and searches diligently until he finds the lost sheep. The woman lights her dark home, sweeps the house thoroughly, and searches carefully until she finds the lost coin. The father watches longingly for his son. Then, on first sight of the young man in the distance, the father runs through the city to greet the lost son and to lovingly restore him to his position in the family.

Jesus is clearly showing His own heart and that of His heavenly Father—a heart that requires diligent, relentless searching for all who have separated themselves from fellowship with a loving God.

An important context

But the context of this passage is so important. Jesus reveals His heart for the lost through these stories because the good religious people of His day were criticizing Him. "This man spends His time

with the riff-raff of society, people who are clearly sinners. He welcomes them; He even eats with them!" The implication is that no person of true faith would hang out with these scum. Instead, he should devote his time and energy with good churchgoers like us.

Self-fulfilling priorities

Unfortunately, we are so much like those Pharisees. My heart aches when I think how much time, effort, and money we invest in the church in activities and ministries that upbuild our own lives (as important as that is) while at the same time devoting so little energy and resources in reaching the lost. I'm as guilty as anyone of having priorities that are self-fulfilling rather than focused on fulfilling God's purposes in a lost and dying world.

My brother or sister in the faith, let us allow nothing—no fear or anxiety, no trivial pursuits of daily life, no person or possession—to prevent us from having the heart of our Father God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who said, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10), also said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21), and "you will receive power . . . and you will be my witnesses . . ." (Acts 1:8).

How may we acquire the heart of God for the lost as our own heart-felt attitude?

(1) First, by *prayer*: asking God to give us His heart of compassion and longing, and praying for family members and friends who have not found saving faith in Jesus Christ.

(2) Second, by *becoming equipped* to share our faith: participating in Passing On the Promise or other outreach opportunities through our churches in our own communities.

(3) Third, by *watching diligently for needs* in other persons' lives: looking for divine appointments to say words of faith and hope and to do deeds of kindness in the name of Jesus Christ.

(4) And fourth, by *making outreach a financial priority*: through giving greater emphasis in the use of our personal finances and possessions and those of our churches in ministries that will advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The heart of God is focused on reaching the lost, on bringing them to saving faith, and on restoring their relationship to Himself. May you and I have His heart for the lost. [†]

POTP Time Table

September 1992–March 1993 — Churches decide to enter POTP; complete covenant of participation

January–April 1993 — Churches select two co-coordinators; order initial POTP materials from Brethren Church National Office

April–May 1993 — Co-coordinators and pastors register for Evangelism Leaders Academy (ELA)

June–August 1993 — Co-coordinators and pastors attend a one-week ELA

August 1993 — 105th General Conference features concert of prayer for spiritual awakening and world evangelization

August–September 1993 — POTP Congregational Dinner

September 1993 — First study curriculum begins

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries. He is serving as the national coordinator for Passing On the Promise.

Growing Pains

By Brad Hardesty



WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I grew quickly. As an eighth grader, I was five feet eleven and weighed 175 pounds. I could wear my father's Navy uniform when I was ten. I remember getting a new pair of shoes about every 4-5 months, depending on how big they were when Mom bought them. The longest I ever wore a pair of pants was six months, and that was with the cuffs rolled up two or three times.

To top it all, I never received any hand-me-downs. I am the youngest child in my family, but the only boy. My father wasn't about to let his son wear any hand-me-downs from his daughters, not even basic blue jeans.

Growth costs

Why am I telling you all this? Growth, dear brethren, costs. A parent can't expect to keep a growing child in clothes without it costing something. (I haven't told you about my growing appetite as a young boy!) The same is true of a church. How in the world can we expect a church to grow if we aren't willing to pay the cost. And I'm not just talking finances.

Alexander Mack wrote a hymn entitled, "Count Well the Cost." Brethren, let's quit kidding ourselves. If we want to grow by adding persons to the kingdom of

God, it will cost us something. If we want to grow by reshuffling the church deck, then it won't cost much, but we won't be adding many to the kingdom either.

I don't suppose there is any church, even Brethren, that would admit to being against

church growth. But there are many churches, among them some Brethren congregations, whose ministries and statistics prove that they are against church growth.

Brethren, let us examine ourselves and come before God honestly and openly. If we honestly want to grow by adding persons to God's kingdom, then let's count the cost. If we count the cost and decide not to pay it, then let's be honest and admit we don't want to grow. I've found that getting something hidden out into the open is the beginning of healing and wholeness.

I have a nephew who grew so fast that his legs ached. He suffered real growing pains. It would be nice if growth didn't hurt, but the facts prove that growth is often accompanied by pain.

Growth results in conflict

William Easum said at a 1992 Evangelism Leaders Academy that growing churches will experience conflict. Not a very happy thought! I guess the old saying, "No pain, no gain," applies to churches too. We can try to avoid it, we can hope it will eventually go away, but the simple truth remains that growth and pain go together. It's one of the costs we must count.

Brethren, I want to see every church in the Indiana District (and elsewhere too) alive and growing. I want us to welcome with open arms persons who don't look like us, dress like us, smell like us, or even think like us. The honor of ministering to these people and of bringing them a step closer to the kingdom is worth the pain and the cost. [†]

POTP Participation

The following churches have already begun Passing On the Promise or have signed and returned a covenant of participation, indicating their intention to take part. Please remember these churches in your prayers.

Pilot Churches (started the POTP process in 1991/92):

Waterbrook, Bethlehem (S.E.); Ardmore, New Paris, South Bend (Ind.); Northgate (N. Calif.)

Starting in 1993 (previously reported):

Sarasota (Fla.); Park St. (Ohio)

Starting in 1993 (new commitments):

Waterloo Hammond Ave. (Cen.); Bloomingdale (Fla.); Peru, Winding Waters (Ind.); Cheyenne (M.W.); Canton Trinity, Walcrest (Ohio); Linwood, Maurertown, Mt. Olive, Oak Hill, St. James (S.E.); Northwest Chapel (S.W.)

Committed Churches to Date — 21

Other churches are still considering or have decided to take part but have not yet returned their covenant of participation.

When your church has decided to take part in Passing On the Promise, sign and return the covenant of participation . . . as soon as possible, but no later than April 1, 1993.

Rev. Hardesty is pastor of the New Paris, Ind., First Brethren Church (a Passing On the Promise pilot church), POTP field staff for Indiana and Central districts, and moderator of the Indiana District Conference.

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POTP — Bearing Fruit at Northgate

By Roger Stogsdill

WHAT A HOLIDAY SEASON! It all started with the Thanksgiving dinner, which was attended by 125 people. You see, our social hall only accommodates 100 people comfortably. We managed to get everyone seated and fed. The program of celebration included an ingathering of funds collected for World Relief.

Next, we turned our attention to Christmas. On the first Sunday of December, we distributed Christmas cards with names and addresses of non-Christian friends and family members. We had gathered these names during the fall as part of our study of the *Promise for the Future* curriculum, a part of the Passing On the Promise process.

The cards contained a Christmas greeting and an invitation to church services. They were designed to be hand delivered to more than 50 prospective families by those from our church who would be willing to do so. This created an atmosphere of enthusiasm as well as expectancy that carried through the events of the Advent season.

Christmas dinner theater

Our second annual Christmas dinner theater was different this year. Not only was the crowd of 120 larger than the previous year, but the format was new as well. Guests were seated at num-

bered tables. Those seated at tables one through nine were assigned the task of performing a scene from the Christmas drama with the number corresponding to the number of their table.

During the meal they assigned parts and familiarized themselves with the script. After dinner, the

participants selected costumes and prepared for and preformed the play. What fun we had acting out the various scenes of the Christmas drama!

Actually, that evening's enjoyment was enhanced by what had happened following the morning worship service. I had the joyful opportunity of baptizing eleven persons. The entire deacon board had to swing into action to help with this service.

Two reasons for excitement

Excitement built as we realized two things. The first was that we were celebrating Christ's birth by celebrating the new birth of eleven people in the faith. What could be more appropriate?

The second had to do with our involvement in Passing On the Promise. In September we had set a goal to see our congregation grow by ten percent by June 1993 through additions of persons by



Doug Harnden as Zechariah, father of John the Baptist.



Wise men (l. to r.) Pastor Roger Stogsdill, Bob Harnden, and Alvin Mathews.

Rev. Stogsdill is pastor of the Northgate Community Brethren Church in Manteca, Calif., a Passing On the Promise pilot church. He also serves as POTP field staff for the Northern California and Southwest districts.

conversion alone. Transfers of membership, though certainly welcome, would not be included in assessing our progress. We could hardly contain ourselves when we realized our goal had been surpassed and 1993 had yet to arrive!

We eagerly awaited what might happen on Christmas Sunday. We were thrilled last Easter when 165 people attended that service. But what would happen at our Christmas worship service?

At the beginning of the service, the count was in the 150s. But when the time in the service came for the children to present their Christmas program, "Twas the Night Before," there were 179 present! More importantly, many of those present had no connection to another church. And God gave us the opportunity to present them the Good News of the gospel and to minister to them.



Angel Dorothy Huse (l.) with shepherds Don Huse (c.) and Carol Wynns.

The atmosphere of friendliness, outreach, and expectancy continues to grow as we enter 1993. This environment, already present in our church, has been cultivated by our involvement in

Passing On the Promise. When people get a taste for winning others to Christ, there is no containing the enthusiasm. And for that matter, who would want to contain it?! [†]



ON SATURDAY, January 16, the Northern Indiana Passing On the Promise pilot churches held their first district support meeting at the South Bend First Brethren Church. Nineteen persons attended the meeting, which provided an opportunity to celebrate what is happening in the churches and to provide encouragement for the months ahead.

The following comments about what is happening in individual congregations were shared:

"Two small groups formed naturally without a special program to do so."

"Increased prayer emphasis."

Other POTP Fruit

"Seven people were received into membership."

"Our prayer walk before Evangelism Sunday had over 30 participating."

"We had a reality check — recognizing our strengths and weaknesses — through the congregational self-study."

"Attitudes toward outreach are changing."

"We had unity in our Sunday school through classes studying the same curriculum."

"The congregation is gaining a unified purpose and goals."

"We're discovering specific needs and ministering to them."

"People are taking risks, doing things they thought they couldn't do."

"Over 35 prospects were identified; people from the church took the initiative to invite them through

the Christmas card outreach."

"The Holy Spirit is motivating people to walk the talk."

"It's opened us up mentally and spiritually to new people."

"People are finding their ministries."

"We've started some adult elective studies for specific needs."

"Our coordinators have been enthusiastic."

In addition to the district support meeting, the co-coordinators and pastors of the pilot churches meet monthly for fellowship, encouragement, and prayer. This mutual support was especially important when the husband of one co-coordinator died unexpectedly in November.

Please continue to pray for the pilot churches as they set the pace for other Brethren churches who will begin the Passing On the Promise process in 1993. [†]



West (at l.) and north sides of the new sanctuary addition. Photo by Ralph Hurley.

Gretna Brethren Church Dedicates Sanctuary Addition on January 3rd

Bellefontaine, Ohio — The Gretna Brethren Church dedicated its new sanctuary addition on the first Sunday of the New Year.

Moderator Thomas Losey, Building Committee chairman Dean Hess, and statutory agent Bob McPherson served as worship leaders for the 3:00 p.m. service. Rev. Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries and a former member of the congregation, delivered the message. Attendance for the service was 154.

A letter was read during the service from Pastor Lynn Mercer, who was unable to be present because of the death of his mother, whose funeral was held the previous day. Letters and greetings were also received from area pastors, former pastors, other Brethren churches, building suppliers, and others.

Special music for the service included

a vocal call to worship by Deanna Hauk, Mary Hess, and Phyllis Jerviss; a selection by the Children's Choir under the direction of Phyllis Jerviss; a solo by Bob McPherson; and an anthem by the Gretna Church Choir under the direction of Shirley T. McPherson.

The addition to the Gretna Church building measures 136 feet by 45 feet and includes three classrooms, two offices, restrooms, a foyer, and the sanctuary (77 x 45 feet), which has fixed seating for 320 people. It is handicapped-accessible and connects to the remainder of the church building at the north end of the educational wing. Cost of construction and furnishings was approximately \$260,000.

Ground was broken May 3, 1992, and construction began the following day. The first worship service was held in the new sanctuary on December 13. Zion

Church Designers and Builders of Zion, Ill., served as the agent for the project, and Levi Beck of Alliance, Ohio, was the working superintendent. Much of the labor was volunteered by members and friends of the congregation, under the coordination of Dean Hess.

Other Building Committee members in addition to Dean Hess were Jenean Jackson, David Jackson, Ed Hauk, Dave Jenkins, Robb Cummins, Mike Kennedy, Doyle McPherson, Skip Wiford, Thomas Losey (moderator), and Bill Deardurff. Betty Deardurff served as the coordinator for the many snacks and lunches for the workers.

An open house with refreshments and fellowship followed the dedication service. During the open house a video was played in the new foyer showing construction of the new addition.

The Gretna Church has 151 members and averages 90 for Sunday school and 108 in worship. Attendance on December 13, the first Sunday in the new sanctuary, was 164. The old sanctuary will be used for fellowship and worship.

— reported by Pastor Lynn Mercer

Pastors to Meet March 16-18 At Stonecroft Conference Center

Mulvane, Kans. — The 1993 National Brethren Pastors Conference will be held March 16-18, 1993, at Stonecroft Conference Center near Branson, Missouri.

Resource person for the conference will be Rev. Earl Pickard, National Prayer Director—Campus Crusade for Christ, an associate of David Bryant, the scheduled 1993 General Conference speaker. Rev. Pickard is a church consultant specializing in master-planning, ministry development, and leadership mentoring. He will guide conference participants through a

process for awakening prayer in their personal lives, churches, and communities. His time with the pastors will serve as a prelude to General Conference.

The conference program will also include input from The Brethren Church Doctrine, Research and Publication Committee, and times for discussion.

The cost of the conference is \$175 per couple; \$125 per single (\$100 if sharing a room); \$40 per teen; \$20 per child 3-12; free for children under three.

Pastors Conference is a valuable time of Christian growth, spiritual refreshment, and fellowship for Brethren pastors and their spouses. Churches are urged to provide pastors the time off and the finances to attend this gathering.

"... You are my hope,
O Lord God." Ps. 71:5 (NKJ)

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Brethren Bible Church Meeting Needs By Operating Food Pantry in Louisville

Louisville, Ohio — Some people of limited means in the Louisville community have more food on their tables, thanks to a Food Pantry ministry operated by the Louisville Brethren Bible Church.

The Food Pantry was organized last April by a Sunday school class at the Brethren Bible Church, in conjunction with the Louisville Ministerial Association. Brethren Bible member Shirley Brown serves as director of the Food Pantry, and other members of the Brethren Bible congregation serve on a rotating basis as coordinators, food receivers, packagers, and collectors.

From April to the end of 1992, the Food Pantry served more than 50 families in Louisville, some on a regular basis. Approximately 25 families received food baskets for Thanksgiving, and 35 families were given Christmas baskets.

Donations for the Pantry come from most of the churches in Louisville and

from businesses, community organizations, farmers, and other individuals. In

December the Pantry received a donation of \$1,255 from the Louisville Education Association. Such donations are stretched even further by purchasing through the Akron Food Bank, with which the Food Pantry is affiliated.

— reported by Shirley Brown



Dave Augusta (l.), president of the Louisville Education Association, and Becky Howard, Building Rep./Coordinator, present a \$1,255 check for the Louisville Food Pantry to Shirley Brown, Food Pantry director, Penny Knouff, coordinator, and Rev. Jim Ray, pastor of the Brethren Bible Church.

Photo by Paul Clapper, Louisville Herald.

Pastor Receives Christmas Gift Filled with Christian Symbolism

Linwood, Md. — Rev. Robert Keplinger, pastor of the Linwood Brethren Church, received a very special Christmas gift from Major Warren Lowman, a member of his congregation.

Major Lowman was stationed in Jerusalem with the military, where he purchased for Pastor Keplinger a white linen stole with the Jerusalem Cross embroidered on it in beautiful colors.



Major Warren Lowman

The Jerusalem Cross, also known as the five-fold cross or the Crusader's Cross, is composed of four crosses centered on a fifth cross in such a way as to form one large cross. Usually, four additional small crosses appear in the corners of this larger cross.

The symbolism of this cross can be traced as follows: Originally known as the five-fold cross, the five crosses represent the five wounds of the Lord's

crucifixion. It became the Coat of Arms of the first ruler of the Latin Kingdom in Jerusalem, and thus became known as the Jerusalem Cross.

Later the cross was used extensively by the Crusaders, and the five crosses



Rev. Robert Keplinger wearing the stole he received from Major Warren Lowman.

were said to symbolize Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain, as well as the five wounds.

Sometimes the four small crosses are said to represent the four corners of the earth, to which missionaries of the cross have carried the gospel since the days of the original Church of Jerusalem (represented by the large cross).

Major Lowman, who presented the gift to Rev. Keplinger, is currently stationed in Cairo, Egypt.

— submitted by Rev. Robert Keplinger

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Food Ministry of Mountain View Church Helps Take the Bite Out of Food Budget

The following article about a ministry of the Mountain View Brethren Church in Frederick, Md., appeared in the December 11, 1992, edition of The Frederick News-Post. It was written by Karen Gardner, assistant family editor of the News-Post, and is reprinted here with the permission of that newspaper. The Mountain View Church is a Brethren Home Mission congregation.

IF YOU VOLUNTEER two hours a month and are looking for a way to cut down on your grocery bill, then SHARE might be for you.

SHARE, which stands for self help and resource exchange, offers \$30 to \$35 worth of groceries for \$13 and the volunteer work.

And the best thing about it, said Bryan Hayden, is "Anyone that eats qualifies."

Cheryl Hayden first learned about SHARE about 18 months ago while living in Falmouth, Mass. She and her husband, Bryan, were moving to Frederick to start a business, and he talked to Charles Beekley, pastor of the Mountain View Brethren Church, about starting SHARE in Frederick.

Mr. Beekley liked what he was told about SHARE, and in March SHARE began with six families. "We thought it'd be kind of crazy not to take advantage of this," Mr. Hayden said.

Today, 18 households participate in SHARE each month, and not all are members of the Mountain View Church, Mr. Beekley said.

"This is not an effort to twist anyone's arm to get them in our doors," Mr. Beekley said. "A few SHARE members are very active in other churches."

In fact, SHARE is sponsored by Associated Catholic Charities in the Baltimore and Washington areas. Nationally, it is a nonsectarian organization, with 400,000 members.

"I like it because I'm retired and I like to volunteer for things," Gary Snyder, who with Bryan Hayden often drives to Baltimore to get the SHARE packages, said. "It sounded like a really neat program for folks who are already dedicated to some kind of volunteer program."

What attracts people to SHARE is the no strings attached attitude that pervades the program, Mr. Beekley said. The two hours of volunteer service can be done at a church, school, or organized community program, or it can be some-

thing as simple as shopping for an elderly neighbor or baby-sitting for a neighbor, he added.

"Just do something outside yourself," he said. One woman did her monthly quota recently at the Ross Perot for President headquarters in Frederick. Politics is one of the suggested volunteerism categories. Others include, but aren't restricted to church, youth, health, transportation and senior citizens.

No income limits for participants are set. Food stamps can be used toward the \$13 share, but the vast majority of members don't qualify for food stamps.

"It's to increase community participation," Mrs. Hayden said. "It does increase the volunteer force in the community." The SHARE chapter she belonged to in New England had 125 household participants, and she'd like to see the Frederick SHARE chapter grow to that extent.

Volunteerism could extend to a nursing home, a library, a soup kitchen. It could mean raising funds for a charity. "Two hours a month is not a whole lot," Mrs. Hayden said.

A list of potential volunteer activities put out by SHARE suggests such varied tasks as calling a sick neighbor, calling a latchkey child every week, working in a community block garden, adopting a street to keep it clean, baking cookies for a child's class or church, working on a church festival or teaching Sunday school.

Older, retired people on fixed incomes could benefit from SHARE, Mr. Beekley said. They have the time to volunteer and could save money on groceries as well.

The food package varies a bit each month. "There are generally potatoes and onions, and a good-sized bag of chicken and ground turkey," Mrs. Hayden said.

The arrival of a SHARE package makes grocery shopping a little easier for the Haydens. "We've had weeks that

(continued on next page)



Frederick News-Post staff photo by Timothy Jacobsen.

Charles Beekley (r.), pastor of the Mountain View Brethren Church, and Bryan Hayden hold bags of groceries that will be used in the food ministry of the church.

Bowmans Ordained Deacon and Deaconess At Maurertown, Virginia, Brethren Church

Maurertown, Va. — Earl and Frances Bowman were ordained deacon and deaconess Sunday, November 29, in the Maurertown Brethren Church.

Mr. Bowman, who operates his own home improvement business, is a trustee of the Maurertown Church and sings in the church choir. Mrs. Bowman, a nurse, helps with the junior church. They are the parents of two children, Sherri, a teacher, and David, who works with his dad in the family business.

Rev. Robert Keplinger, pastor of the Linwood, Md., Brethren Church and District Board of Overseers representative for the Maurertown Brethren Church, presented a message, "Knowing What to Do," during the morning worship service in which the ordination took place. Then he and Rev. Richard Craver, pastor of the



Pastor Richard Craver (c.) with the new deacon couple, Frances and Earl Bowman. Photo by Steve Craver.

Maurertown Church, conducted the service of ordination for the Bowmans. Cindy Copp read the action of the congregation calling for the ordination of the Bowmans as deacon and deaconess.

The day of the Bowmans' ordination was designated "Deacon Board Sunday"

in the Maurertown Church, and the deacons and deaconesses sat together in the "Amen Corner" of the sanctuary. They also served as worship leader and ushers, and participated in the laying on of hands for the new deacon couple.

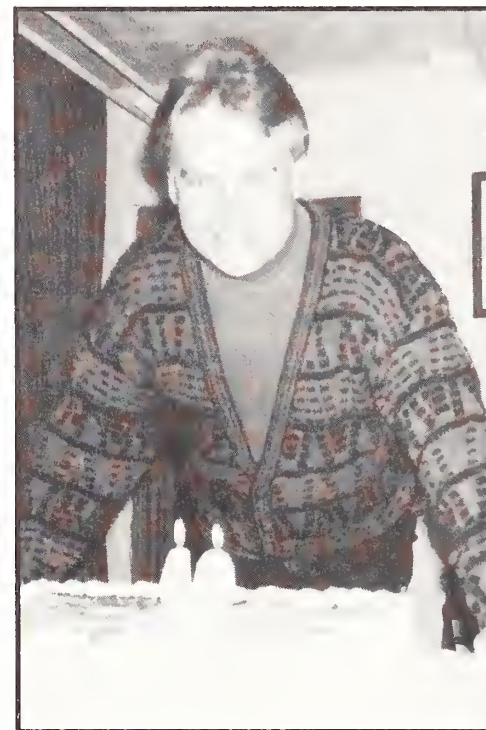
Following the service, a fellowship meal was held in honor of the Bowmans.

— reported by Maxine Craver

Trinity Church Honors Pastor With Surprise Birthday Party

Canton, Ohio — Members of the Trinity Brethren Church surprised their pastor, Rev. Terry Colley, on December 20 with a party in honor of his 40th birthday.

Pastor Colley was truly surprised, as he thought that he was attending the church's annual Christmas dinner.



Pastor Terry Colley gets set to blow out the candles on the cake at his surprise birthday party.

The celebration began with a covered dish dinner, followed by games organized by Bob and Darlene Workinger. Then cake and ice cream were served.

Pastor Colley received many lovely gifts, and everyone enjoyed the evening of fun and fellowship.

Rev. Colley has served the Canton Trinity congregation since January 1992.

— reported by Kay Kline

O Lord, help my words to be gracious and tender today, for tomorrow I may have to eat them.

— Anonymous

(continued from previous page)

it's gotten me through with two weeks worth of meals," she said. "I won't have to go to the grocery store except to buy eggs, milk and bread."

SHARE is able to get food at lower costs because items are purchased in bulk. Packaging is also kept to a minimum.

A recent SHARE package included five pounds of potatoes, a package of pork patties, two packages of hot dogs in addition to the chicken and turkey. No onions were in this month's bag, but there was a head of cabbage, lettuce, two squash, two zucchini, a pineapple, five pears, a pound of kidney beans, a package of chili seasoning, a box of pancake mix and a package of frozen corn on the cob.

Another month's supply included a package of fish, cucumbers, scallions, bananas, oranges, beef enchiladas, white and sweet potatoes, carrots and celery. The same month included black-eyed peas, and to help those unfamiliar with this dried legume, a recipe for black-eyed peas.

The meat is frozen and is worth a little less than half the value of the entire package.

"We just recognized some people want relief from the cost of groceries," Mr. Beekley said. "Every little bit helps. It

fits so nicely with the Brethren theology of service to mankind."

Still, he added, "Nobody is ever asked to come to our church." Pickup is at the church, in Rose Hill Plaza. Mr. Beekley, who worked for the Brethren denomination for 10 years in Ashland, Ohio, came to Frederick at the request of the church to start a congregation.

When Mr. Hayden told him about SHARE, he agreed to begin Frederick's first chapter in March. Each month, the two would drive to a Washington, D.C., pickup place and get the food packages.

In May, Baltimore began food distribution, and the Mountain View chapter switched to a Baltimore pickup site. Once a month, Mr. Snyder and Mr. Hayden drive to the distribution site and get the food.

SHARE started in 1983 in San Diego, with 7,000 food packages assembled in a single day. There are now 24 SHARE programs around the country.

Since September, four months after SHARE got its Baltimore start, the number of orders has jumped from 2,880 to 8,267 in December.

Cheryl Hayden usually sees the arrival of a SHARE package as a reason to invite friends over for a meal. "I feel like sharing with someone else," she said. "So I'll make something and invite in friends."

Locations and Speakers Announced For Evangelism Leaders Academy

Ashland, Ohio — Locations and principal speakers for the 1993 Evangelism Leaders Academy have been chosen and announced.

The Brethren Church uses the academy for training local Passing On the Promise leaders.

Locations and the speakers for each will be as follows.

Locations: Warner Southern College, Lake Wales, Fla. (June 7-10), and Lebanon Valley College, Annville, Pa. (July 5-8).

Speakers:

— Doug Murren, pastor, Eastside Foursquare Church, Kirkland, Wash.; featured seminar leader for the Charles F. Fuller Institute; author of *The Baby Boomerang*; topic: "The 21st Century Leader: New Visions for a New Era"

— Jenny Jackson-Adams, pastor, Morningside United Methodist Church, Americus, Ga.; topic: "How to Activate a Passive Congregation"

Locations: Taylor University, Upland, Ind. (July 12-15), and University

of LaVerne, La Verne, CA (August 9-12).

Speakers:

— Norman Shawchuck, internationally acclaimed consultant and lecturer; author of *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants* and other books; topic: "Marketing for Congregations"

— Angel Torro, pastor, Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, Lake Placid, Fla.; active in the United Methodist's evangelism movement, Vision 2000; topic: "Witnessing with the Spirit's Power"

Locations: Bethel College, N. Newton, Kans. (July 19-22), and Warner Pacific College, Portland, Oreg. (August 9-12).

Speakers:

— Cynthia Hale, pastor, Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, Ga.; topic: "Managing Conflict and Change in a Growing Church"

— Terry Hershey, executive director of Christian Focus; seminar leader on young adult ministry; topic: "How to Reach Single Adults"

Commenting on the speakers, Paul Munday, executive director of the Evangelism Leaders Academy, said, "Seldom is a series of national events able to pull together such an array of talent. In the mix are well-known speakers and 'rising stars'; Anglo leaders and Hispanic and Black leaders as well; pastors and consultants, in addition to professional presenters. We are excited about this rich resource of insight and ability—praying that persons will access it . . . for the growth of the church."

The Evangelism Leaders Academy was begun in 1985 with 35 persons. Since then it has grown to more than 1,400 participants per year from 12 denominations. The academy is sponsored by the Church of the Brethren. Major partners besides The Brethren Church include the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the General Conference Mennonite Church, and the Mennonite Church. These partners also use the academy for training leaders for processes similar to Passing On the Promise.

Persons interested in more information may request a brochure by contacting The Brethren Church National Office (419-289-1708) or the academy office (800-323-8039, extension 451).

Berlin Brethren Church Gets New Nativity Scene in 1992

Berlin, Pa. — The traditional nativity scene on the lawn of the Berlin Brethren Church had a fresh appearance during the 1992 Advent season, thanks to the congregation's Young Adult Class.

Many years ago, under the guidance of Geneva Altfather, the youth of the church had made a nativity scene for the church lawn. Over the years, as the various Sunday school classes (on a rotating basis) set up the scene each year, the paint on the figures was touched up as needed and the shed design for the scene was changed.

In 1992 it was once again the Young Adult Class's turn to put up the scene. But they remembered that four years earlier, when they had last done the

outdoor Christmas decorations, the scene was showing considerable wear. So in September they dragged out the figures and had a look.

They found, among other things, that the colors were faded and mismatched, one shepherd had lost a hand, Joseph had eyes of two different shapes, the donkey had lost its tail, and most of the figures were flat-headed from people missing the stakes when the figures were pounded into the ground. The class decided a new nativity scene was needed.

Wood was secured and the figures drawn. It was decided to add an angel, so a pattern for this had to be found. Then an unexpected volunteer cut out the figures and Dorie Lambert painted them. The men of the class made a new shed from some used barn siding. Then on a cold, wintry day, the scene was placed on the church lawn.

Not only did the nativity scene on the front lawn of the Berlin Brethren Church have a fresh appearance this past Christmas, but the Young Adult Class had a good time of fellowship redoing it.

— reported by Frances Bockes; submitted by Chris Glessner



The Berlin Brethren Church's new nativity scene.

Goshen First Brethren Church Welcomes New Youth Pastor

Goshen, Ind. — The First Brethren Church of Goshen welcomed David Kline January 3 as its new youth pastor.

Kline is a graduate of Moody Bible Institute and Ashland Theological Sem-



David and Valerie Kline

inary. During high school and college, he engaged in Christian ministry as a Sunday school teacher, junior church leader, and youth group leader.

David and his wife Valerie were welcomed with a carry-in meal after the worship service and given gifts of food and money to help fill their cupboards.

— reported by Peggy Miller

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Getting Caught Being Good

My children were going through one of those phases. It happens at our house now and then, and probably at your house too. The kids just could not seem to get settled down at bedtime. I was growing tired of sending them back to their beds ten times after they had already been tucked in "for the last time."

At last I'd had enough. I wasn't going to put up with this nonsense one night longer. After all, it was for their own good. The next day always goes so much better for everyone when they have had a good night's sleep. They feel better, get along with others better, and are happier and healthier when they have had enough rest. I'm trying to help them have a happier, healthier life. That's why I make rules for them.

So, resolved that this problem wouldn't happen again, I tucked in the children with hugs and kisses and teddy bears. Then I started down the stairs, stopped, and with a sudden, very serious voice, said, "Behave and stay in bed. I'm coming back, and you don't want me to find you up when I do!"

You know something? It worked pretty well. They didn't know just how soon I would come back, but they did know that I was coming. And they knew that I had better not find them out of bed. It wasn't that my children had to worry that I'd stop loving them if I found them out of bed. They know that I will always love them. But they knew that I wouldn't be happy with them if I found them out of bed. There are two good reasons to behave: your own well-being and what you'll get "caught" doing. I'd rather get caught being good than being bad, wouldn't you?

The Bible teaches us all kinds of things that we are supposed to be doing—things like telling the truth, being kind to others, etc. And when we think about it, we realize that it is just plain good for everyone concerned when we do these things.

But sometimes we need to be reminded that Jesus is coming again. What will we be doing when He comes? The Bible reminds us about this in several places. Read Matthew 24:36—25:46 to find out what Jesus Himself said would happen when He returns.

In Matthew 25:34-36, Jesus listed some things that He wants His followers to do for others until He comes again. He said that whatever we do for others, He will count it as though we had done it *for Him*. Use your Bible* to find out what we are to do. Have you been loving people in the ways Jesus tells us to? Next, find these words in the puzzle.

1. I was _____ and you gave me something to _____.
2. I was _____ and you gave me something to _____.
3. I was a _____ and you _____ me in.
4. I needed _____ and you _____ me.
5. I was _____ and you _____ after me.
6. I was in _____ and you came to _____ me.

*Verses are quoted from the *New International Version*.

F	G	V	O	P	M	Q	Y	R	T	K	Y
E	S	I	C	K	H	W	A	L	X	R	J
T	T	S	L	N	R	L	O	T	G	G	B
D	R	I	O	I	D	D	V	N	L	M	C
N	A	M	T	R	E	E	U	S	R	U	T
E	N	O	H	D	T	H	I	R	S	T	Y
F	G	Q	E	I	I	T	J	T	L	A	J
P	E	Z	S	N	V	O	C	P	I	E	N
P	R	I	S	O	N	L	O	O	K	E	D
M	V	F	B	Y	I	C	A	O	F	H	B

From The



Grape Vine

Robert and Phil Michael, members of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, were named Farmers of the Year recently by the Carroll County Soil and Water Conservation District. This is the first time in Carroll County that this award has been given to a father-son partnership. Saving the soil on their land has long been a goal of the Michaels, and today they practice no-till agriculture on 100% percent of their farmland.

Jim Tomb has been serving since December 1 as interim pastor of the Vinco Brethren Church of Mineral Point, Pa. Before coming to the Vinco Church, he served for nearly two years as interim pastor of the Colver and Revloc Presbyterian Churches. In the past he ministered to the

My Second Retirement

My first retirement came in 1974 after 37 years of service to Ashland College and Seminary. In the meantime, in 1972, I found myself involved in another field — as a member of the Board of Directors during the initiation of the new Brethren Care nursing home in Ashland.

In 1975 I was asked to become chaplain of Brethren Care as a member of its active staff. After 17 years in this position, I have retired.

Now I am reminiscing about the blessings, the benefits, and the heartwarming association with staff and residents of Brethren Care. It has been a great pleasure to be associated with the administration, nurses, aides, and other workers. I have constantly marveled and rejoiced at the TLC (tender loving care) given by staff to one another and to the residents.

After such experience, I cannot understand why the general public looks upon going to a nursing home as something to be dreaded. Brethren Care makes it pleasant.

The Lord has richly given His blessings to Brethren Care and to me for this wonderful experience. My kindest regards and prayers for Brethren Care will continue. With Paul, I say, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Phil. 1:3).

— L. E. Lindower

Vinco Church as an evangelist, assistant Sunday school teacher, and guest preacher.

James Garrett has accepted a call to become pastor of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church. Jim is currently a student at Ashland Theological Seminary. He, his wife Elizabeth, son Matthew, and daughter Lora will move to Lanark in June. Jim is the son of Pastor Buck and Sarah Garrett, who serve the Bradenton, Fla., Brethren Church.

The Church of the Brethren in Nigeria suffered another tragedy on December 13, when **Rev. Boaz Maina**, the acting general secretary of the church, died in a car accident. This was the second death of a general secretary in two months. The former secretary, Dr. John Guli, was killed in a car accident on October 11. Five other church leaders were in the car with Rev. Maina, including longtime church leader Rev. Mai Sule Biu, who was critically injured.

Rev. Bill Kerner, former Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren

Church (retired), has been serving since December 6 as interim pastor of the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church. Rev. Kerner and his wife Trudy have been accused of bringing Ohio weather to Tucson, which has received much more rain than usual.

Rev. Mark Britton was installed as pastor of the Derby, Kans., First Brethren Church on Sunday afternoon, January 17. District Supervising Elder Reilly Smith, pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church, assisted with the service. This was a "homecoming" for Rev. Britton, who grew up in the Derby Church.

The Newark, Ohio, Brethren Church is taking part in the planning and preparation for a Billy Graham Crusade to be held at Cooper Stadium in Columbus, Ohio, September 22-26 of this year. The Newark Church hosted the Licking County Crusade Information Seminar on January 19, which was attended by approximately 40 pastors and church representatives.

In Memory

Vermeda C. Patrick, 66, January 18. Lifetime member of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Skeldon and Rev. William Menefee.

Garnet Menzie, 70, January 14. Member for 39 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Mildred G. Kaiser, 92, January 12. Faithfully attended and supported the Bryan First Brethren Church for approximately 60 years. Services by Rev. Fred Brandon.

Myrtle A. Riffle, 98, January 12. Member of the Masontown Brethren Church and lifelong member of the Dorcas Class. Services by Pastor Russell King.

Marvin Johnson, 83, January 6. Lifelong member of the Oak Hill First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Skeldon.

Percy (Bud) Connin, 84, January 1. Member for 66 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Fred Brandon, nephew of the deceased, and Rev. Marlin McCann.

Evelyn Mercer, 72, December 27. Longtime member of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church, where she served as Sisterhood and Signal Lights patroness and as superintendent of the children's department. Mrs. Mercer was the mother of Brethren pastor Rev. Lynn Mercer.

Harry D. Meyers, 94, December 23. Member since 1910 and oldest active member at the time of his death of the Berlin Brethren Church, where he served for many years as a deacon. Services by Pastor Bryan G. Karchner.

Addie Wineland, 101, December 23. Member for 88 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Robert Damschroder.

Mrs. Violet Fadeley, 64, December 8. Longtime member of the St. Luke Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dave Benshoff.

Isabelle Goodman, 78, November 19. Member for more than 60 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Grover Rusk, 73, July 29. Member for 42 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. David Rusk.

Goldenaires

Mark and Ruth Rickard, 55th, January 29. Members of the Maurertown Brethren Church.

Rev. Robert and Mayme Schubert, 55th, January 22. Rev. Schubert is serving as interim pastor of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church.

Otis and Alma Stoffer, 60th, January 20. Members of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church.

John and Eleanor Porte, 55th, January 8. Members of the South Bend First Brethren Church.

David and Helen McDonald, 50th, December 27. Members and deacon and deaconess of the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church.

Weddings

Velma J. Frederick to **Rev. David F. Condreay**, January 2, at the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church; Rev. Paul N. Munsen officiating. Rev. Condreay is the pastor of the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church.

Nancy Van Meter to **Paul Matia**, January 2, at the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church; Pastor Arden Gilmer officiating. Bride a member of the Park Street Brethren Church.

Deborah Paul to **Thomas Sprowls, Jr.**, December 19, at the Berlin Brethren Church; Pastor Bryan G. Karchner officiating. Members of the Berlin Brethren Church.

Mary E. Rieger to **Jeffrey D. Hanson**, November 28, at the Falls City First Brethren Church; Pastor Betty Hadley officiating. Members of the Falls City Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Berlin: 2 by baptism

St. Luke: 2 by transfer

South Bend: 4 by baptism

News-Notes From Around the World

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

Muslims in the Commonwealth of Independent States are particularly receptive to the gospel, according to Del Kingsriter, director of the Center for Ministry to Muslims (CMM). Despite this openness, however, the number of people in Central Asia who consider themselves Muslims is growing faster than any other people in the CIS.

Some observers believe this is the result of evangelistic neglect by most Western mission organizations, who have launched their evangelism efforts in the CIS at people of European background, such as Russians and Ukrainians.

In Kazakhstan, a Central Asian state of the Commonwealth, Muslim groups grew at a rate of 24 percent from 1979 to 1989, compared to six percent growth of European groups. CMM estimates that in 30–40 years the CIS will have as many Muslims as Russians.

*Melanie Jongsma
The Bible League news release*

CANADA

The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's National Task Force on Evangelism has set March 6 as the date for what it says will be "the world's largest pizza party."

The party, featuring the Christian music group Petra and the popular speaker and writer Josh McDowell, will link hundreds of local pizza parties across North America by satellite television. "Operation Powerlink," as the program is called, will be carried by the Vision TV channel in Canada.

Operation Powerlink is an outreach program in which youths invite friends to a home, school, community center, or church to watch the March 6 broadcast, which will include music by Petra, provide glimpses of other youths in other parts of North America participating in similar pizza parties, and end with an invitation by Josh McDowell to come to Christ.

At least 8,000 young people in Canada are being trained in peer evangelism, and some 4,000 conversions are expected through the program.

World Evangelical Report

MEXICO

Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari accepted an invitation to attend a prayer breakfast December 10 hosted by evangelical leaders in Mexico. This was the first time in 80 years that the

Mexican government has participated openly with any evangelical group or event.

Since the Mexican revolution in 1910, Mexico's constitution has not recognized the evangelical church, and those involved with religious activities have been considered "non-entities." In fact, until recently Mexican pastors were even denied voting privileges and other rights.

President Salinas circumvented Mexico's official stance, however, when he not only joined more than 600 evangelical leaders for their annual prayer breakfast, but opened up the Presidential Residency for the gathering.

Since 1910 the Mexican constitution has given little attention to the Protestant church. But currently changes are being made which have been favorable to the church. This new relationship between church and state will allow religious leaders to be more public about proclaiming the gospel and more confident about maintaining a presence in Mexican life.

*Melanie Jongsma
The Bible League news release*

AFRICA

War in Liberia and Angola. Famine in Somalia and Mozambique. Political instability in Kenya and Nigeria. Amidst this current state of affairs, 12,000 ordained and lay Christian leaders met in the Nigerian capital, Lagos, recently to reaffirm that "God loves Africa and wants to use it for His glory."

"We meet in the recognition of our historical background of civil wars and tribal strife," said the declaration of the conference, which attracted participants from 45 African countries and 2,140 denominations, "but we join together as one body in Christ, standing on the promises of the Word of God."

"While poverty and starvation and AIDS threaten many across the land, we know that the church is the pathway to peace and prosperity and is the salt of the earth."

The leaders blamed some of the continent's problems on the failure of their own Christian witness. They also confessed that they had become too occupied with their own national problems and had overlooked the spiritual needs of the mostly Muslim North African countries.

The participants committed themselves to "cooperating with the Holy Spirit" in church growth and evangelism. "We further commit ourselves to train and send

10,000 African missionaries cross-culturally by the year 2000 and to establish a strong missionary movement in every country of Africa."

*Isaac Phiri,
WEF Information Interchange*

INDIA

The religious violence between Muslims and Hindus which rocked India and neighboring countries in December and which left at least 1,100 people dead in India may turn out to be an opportunity for Christian witness, says Francis Sunderaraj, general secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India.

"It is an opportunity for Christians to show the spirit of love and reconciliation," says Sunderaraj. In the past Christians have opened their churches to Hindus and Muslims fleeing violence and provided them temporary aid.

From experience gained through dealing with a succession of religious riots in India's recent history, Sunderaraj cautions against provocative theological statements about Christ when religious feeling in the country is so strong. Instead, Christians should focus on helping the victims of the violence without taking sides or making uncalculated statements themselves.

"People will see that we are different and that will give us the opportunity to tell them about the uniqueness of Christ," says Sunderaraj.

*Isaac Phiri
WEF Information Interchange*

EVERYLAND

A milestone in the history of Christianity was reached in 1992 when a portion of Scripture was translated into the 2,000th language of the world.

The event is more symbolic than exact, because in the fields of linguistics and translation the experts are not always in agreement on the criteria for determining such milestones. But the Forum of Bible Agencies, an informal group of 17 Bible translation and distribution organizations, has agreed to publicize jointly five languages, all of which could easily be said to be the 2,000th language in which a portion of Scripture has been translated.

Languages included in the 2,000 are those in which Scripture publication has taken place at any time since the invention of movable type printing in the mid-15th century. Estimates as to the total number of languages in the world range from as low as 3,000 to more than 6,000.

The Bible Society news release

February is "Have a Heart" Month

This month you have the opportunity to have a heart for the lost in your community.

Who are the lost? All who have not accepted the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ and who have not made Him Lord of their lives. Many in our communities are lost and headed for an eternity of separation from God.

You can help reach the lost by giving to the "Have a Heart" offering this month. Brethren churches will receive an offering this month — many on February 14. Up to one-half of the gift you give through your local church will provide funding to help with local outreach ministry.

The other half will help The Brethren Church with supporting costs for Passing On the Promise nationwide.

Our goal this month is ***\$5.00 per person*** or ***\$10.00 per family***. That's only a small amount per person, but it has the potential of paying big dividends for God's kingdom as He multiplies the gifts of Brethren people across the country.

Thank you for your generous gift. And may God give you His heart for the lost!

Give through your local church, or send your gift to:

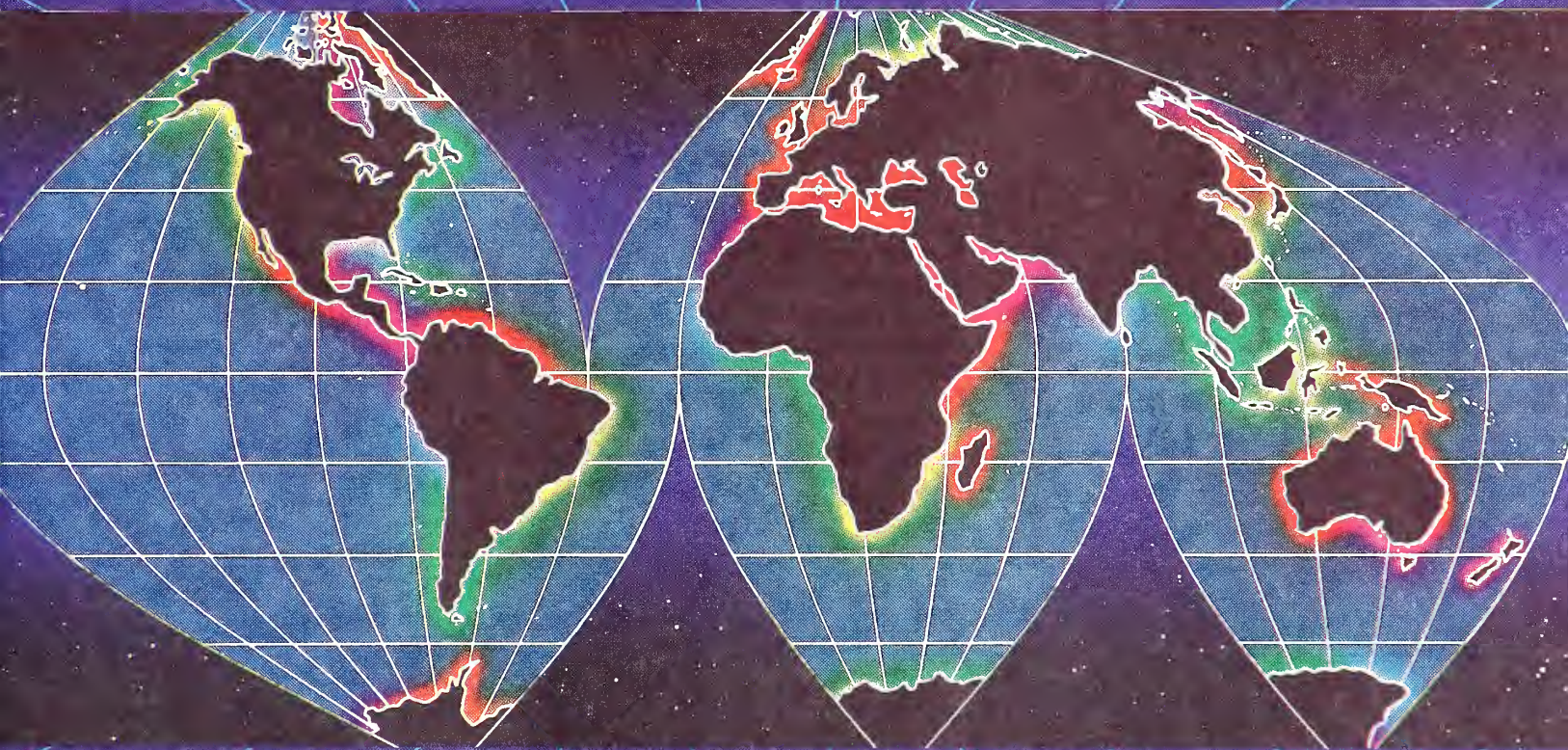
***Have a Heart
The Brethren Church
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805***

Have a



for the lost!

THE BRETHREN
Evangelist
MARCH 1993



Witnesses to the World

"Favorite Song" *Versus* "Beans in a Jar" Theology

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

I READ RECENTLY of a pastor who in his membership classes asks the class members to (1) guess the number of beans he has put into a jar and (b) name their favorite song — two seemingly unrelated activities.

After the students have written their answers, the pastor counts out the number of beans in the jar, and class members check their answers to see who came closest to being correct. Then he turns to the question about their favorite songs and asks whose answer came closest to being correct. To this the students protest that there is no correct answer, claiming that one's favorite song is a matter of personal preference.

Then the pastor asks this question: "When you decide what to believe in terms of your faith, is that more like guessing the number of beans, or more like choosing your favorite song?" (Before reading on, ask yourself how you would answer that question.) When the pastor asks this question, he always gets the same answer: Choosing one's faith is more like choosing a favorite song.*

While this answer may be correct as a description of how people do in fact choose their faith, it is fundamentally wrong in its perception of what choosing one's faith is all about. Furthermore, confusion about the difference between these views of faith is one source of a lot of the wishy-washiness in the church and also one reason why Christians find it difficult to communicate with secular society.

What's the difference

So what's the difference between the two approaches? "Favorite song" theology says that there is no one true faith or body of religious beliefs (or if there

*An account of this appeared in an article by Tim Stafford in *Christianity Today*. I read about it, however, in an editorial by Kermon Thomasson in the November 1992 issue of the *Church of the Brethren Messenger*. I have not read Mr. Stafford's article, so any similarities between his comments and mine (if there are any) are purely amazing. R.C.W.

is, it is so unknowable as to be irrelevant). This approach manifests itself in statements like "It doesn't matter what you believe, just so you're sincere" or "You have your beliefs and I have mine." In the matter of choosing faith, like choosing a favorite song, there is no right answer according to this view of religious belief. It's all a matter of personal preference.

"Beans in a jar" theology, on the other hand, says that there is one true faith, one true body of religious beliefs (a real "jar" with a specific number of "beans" inside). And while it may be difficult to fully know the truth (just as it is difficult to guess the correct number of beans in a jar), there is Truth to be known (a jar with beans in it).

To carry the analogy a bit further, "beans in a jar" theology also recognizes that the beliefs of some are nearer to the truth than the beliefs of others (just as some guesses about the number of beans in the jar are closer to the actual number than others). Furthermore, this kind of theology says that by seeking, reading God's word, praying, and learning from the wisdom of others, it is possible to know more and more about the Truth (just as by doing some careful estimating and a few calculations it is possible to guess pretty close to the actual number of beans in the jar).

Some conclusions

So where is all of this taking us? I'd like to draw several conclusions.

1. It does matter what we believe.

Jesus Christ said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn. 14:6). We must stand firmly on this truth.

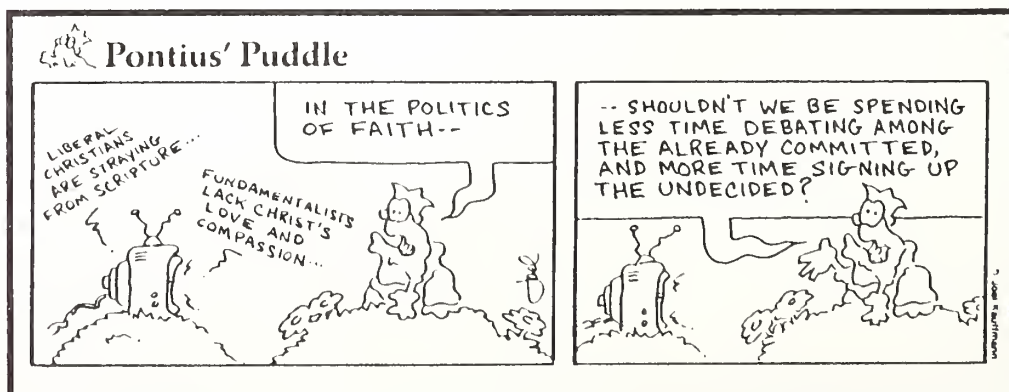
2. While standing firmly on faith in Christ, we must recognize that our knowledge of Him and our understanding of His will are incomplete. Therefore, we must have a commitment to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18).

3. The Bible is basic to knowing God and understanding His will. Therefore, we ought to study it. But there is much to read in the Bible and it is sometimes difficult to understand and apply its teachings. Because this is so, we need to exercise humility when we encounter people who interpret its message differently. We need to be particularly wary of calling people "liberal" or of accusing them of rejecting the authority of the Bible just because their interpretation and application of its teachings differ from our own. They may be just as committed to the authority of the Bible as we are, but they just understand it differently.

4. We need to be aware that it does little good to "argue" religion or morality with those who have a "favorite song" theology (or no theology at all!). When we think we have won our point, they may simply reply, "You have your beliefs and I have mine."

5. The church's efforts to influence society in the moral arena (abortion, pornography, homosexuality, etc.) often have little effect because we appeal to an authority (God, the Bible) that our secular society no longer accepts. In addition to calling society to repent (to recognize the reality of God and the authority of His word), we may also need to find other grounds on which to press our claims with those who fail to accept divine authority.

We can gain a lot of insight when we recognize the difference between these two opposing views of faith. [†]



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Cover: This month's cover reminds us of our General Conference theme for 1993, "Witnesses to the World." This theme stresses the fact that we are to share our Christian faith with all, from our next-door neighbor to those on the opposite side of our planet. The cover also ties in with the World Missions emphasis in this month's Ministry Pages.

The March-April *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

1. A coin and a son.
2. Jesus said this message.
3. The message is: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

This month's Little Crusader page was done by the editor. Mrs. Jackie Rhoades, who had written the children's page for the past year, was unable to continue because of other commitments. We express our sincere thanks to her for her contribution to the past 12 issues of the EVANGELIST.

Leaders

for a

Growing

Church

Third in a series

of four articles on

The Brethren Church's

"Priorities

for the

Nineties"

— by

Ronald W. Waters

Priority 3 — Training Growth Leaders (Leadership Development for Outreach): to equip and provide opportunities for persons to lead outreach ministries for Christ — pastors with an evangelistic vision, planters to begin new churches, and people to lead lay ministries.

GROWING CHURCHES have strong, visionary leaders — persons in ministry with a heart for the lost. What types of leaders are needed if The Brethren Church is to faithfully and effectively fulfill God's mission of reaching the lost?

Servant leaders

As the disciples gathered at the table with Jesus on the night before His crucifixion, "a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest" (Luke 22:24, *NIV*).

Jesus left no question about the attitude of a Christian leader. Warning them against the common practice of lording it over others, He said, "You are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. . . . I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:26-27, *NIV*). It may have been at this point that Jesus washed their feet.

Jesus Himself is our model of a servant leader. As a servant leader, He was not powerless. He said that "all authority in heaven and on earth" had been given to Him. But rather than use that authority to control or manipulate others, He ministered to the needs of others, particularly to their need for reconciliation with God.

Understanding our sin nature, we sometimes fear that our leaders may take a controlling attitude rather than that of a servant. So

we tend to grant responsibility and authority to groups of people — boards or committees or the congregation as a whole — rather than entrusting leadership to a few. The result is creation of bureaucracies — groups who are slow to decide and who encumber their decisions with the burden of regulations and limitations. At times such groups unconsciously discourage ministry rather than empowering and enabling it!

Sometimes we equate attendance at board and committee meetings with "doing ministry" when, in fact, little ministry happens in such meetings. Most churches need fewer decision-making structures so more people can become directly involved in serving others. When we entrust decision-making to fewer persons, many are freed to touch the hearts and lives of other people.

Evangelistic vision

Pastors wear many hats. Perhaps their most important task is giving the local church vision and focus for ministry. George Barna says that effective churches have a "strong pastor": "strong" in being a true leader and "pastor" in understanding the needs of those inside and outside the congregation and in giving vision and spiritual guidance to the church. Says Barna, "A strong pastor is one who takes charge of the church without breaking the spirit of those who wish to be involved."¹

The main focus of the church's vision must be a concern for reaching those who are not yet Christians. Every pastor may not have

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

The denominational priorities being discussed in this series of articles were adopted by the 1992 General Conference.

¹George Barna, *User Friendly Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1991), p. 143.

the gift of an evangelist, but each must set the evangelistic tone for the congregation by preaching on outreach themes, providing training opportunities, and modeling direct faith-sharing with others.

Pastoral ministry often focuses on the needs of believers — church members have significant needs and, after all, they expect a pastor to minister to their needs. But sometimes church members place so many demands on the pastor's time that the pastor has little opportunity to minister to the unsaved. Most churches would do well to free the pastor from some pastoral care responsibilities to allow for more direct outreach to those in the community.

Planters for new churches

The fourth Brethren Church priority for the 1990s is planting new churches and will be considered next month. If new churches are to be planted, persons must be called and equipped to lead in this effort.

Church planting pastors are a critical part of the process. The responsibilities of a pastor of a new church are different from those of a pastor of an established congregation. This pastor must be a "jack-of-all-trades" and a "self-starter." A committed life of prayer, a deep faith, and a clear vision are vital. And a supportive family is also essential!

Lay persons, too, have an important role. Starting a new church is facilitated when a core group assists in this process.

Often, lay persons move to the site of a new church to serve as "tentmakers" — those who earn their livelihood from a job in the community so they may help establish the new congregation. Others may not relocate, serving instead as part of the nucleus of a new daughter church started by their home congregation.

Whether as a planting pastor or as a tentmaker, workers must be prepared to work with "new wine-

skins." New churches must have the flexibility to minister to new needs in new ways. This requires new attitudes and a willingness to try new approaches to ministry and church structures.

Leaders for lay ministries

Ministry belongs to all God's people. The Bible nowhere portrays the Christian faith as a "spectator sport" or provides for retirement from ministry (consider Caleb in Joshua 14:6-15).

Unfortunately, we've often tried to plug people into existing organizational slots — an office or a board or committee. Effective churches today enable most of their people to "do ministry" rather than serve in decision-making roles.

Joy in ministry comes from doing something we enjoy, and most people enjoy doing what comes naturally to them. God has blessed each believer with one or more spiritual gifts and with many natural abilities. There is value in mutually identifying our gifts and abilities, then in using those gifts in ministry that serves Christ and other persons.

Identifying our gifts, we discover how richly God has blessed us. And offering those gifts back to Him in service, we discover true joy in serving Jesus.

What about you?

Outreach is the task of all believers. Some, who are called to be pastors, will present a clear vision for sharing the faith and will model an outreach lifestyle. Some, who are called to church planting, will make special commitments to extend the faith among those who are not yet believers in our saving Lord Jesus. Some, who may think of themselves as "only a lay person," will hear God's call to discover their spiritual gifts and abilities and use them to serve Him where they now live and work.

You fit into one of those three roles. How is God calling you? [†]

Pastors wear many hats. Perhaps their most important task is giving the local church vision and focus for ministry.

Sometimes we equate attendance at board and committee meetings with "doing ministry" when, in fact, little ministry happens in such meetings. . . . When we entrust decision-making to fewer persons, many are freed to touch the hearts and lives of other people.

Identifying our gifts, we discover how richly God has blessed us. And offering those gifts back to Him in service, we discover true joy in serving Jesus.



DOES GOD CARE?

A Human Lesson About Divine Compassion

By Brad Hardesty

I TOOK my six-year-old daughter, Rebekah, to see an allergist in January. Before we went, I told her a little about what would happen there in order to prepare her mentally and emotionally for the procedure.

When we arrived at the office, we talked with the allergist a few minutes. Then Rebekah laid down on her stomach on the examination table, and the allergist put some drops on her back. Then the allergist proceeded to prick Rebekah's skin 51 times. Fifty-one times on her back! And you know how sensitive the skin on your back is.

When the allergist finished that test, she took seven syringes and injected fluid under the skin on Rebekah's forearms. Rebekah cried, and I had tears in my eyes as well. This whole process took a couple of hours.

Why did I allow this?

Why did I subject my daughter to this? Don't I love her? Didn't I care that she would have to suffer so much pain? What kind of father would not only allow this to happen, but would make the arrangements and take his daughter to the place where it would occur? He sounds like a pretty cruel father, doesn't he?

In our lives, it sometimes seems as if we, too, are lying on our stomachs while Satan is poking and pricking our backs to see if we will react. And all the time we may be thinking, "What's going on?"

Rev. Hardesty is pastor of the New Paris, Indiana, First Brethren Church.

Doesn't God care? What kind of Father would allow this?"

What kind of Father is God?

In Psalm 103:13-14, David tells us what kind of Father we have. He writes, "As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust" (NIV).

Does God care? Yes, He does! He has the same kind of compassion for us that we who are parents have for our children.

When Rebekah was having the skin-prick test, she first reacted to the pricks by wincing. Then her face turned red. As the skin pricks continued, she yelled, "Ouch!" And then the tears welled up in her eyes.

Throughout the whole procedure, I held her little hand. But she didn't just *hold* my hand, she grasped it. With every skin prick she clenched it anew.

Throughout this whole ordeal, I never let go of Rebekah's hand. How cruel I would have been if I had let go! And I never stopped looking into her eyes as they filled with tears. My hand and my eyes were telling her, "I'm here. I'm with you. I won't leave you and let you go through this alone."

In my compassion, I even wanted to endure the pain for her. But I knew that I couldn't. One thing was sure, however; I was not going to leave her alone, because I care for my daughter very much.

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has com-

passion on you when you're hurting. He holds your hand. He holds you close. He looks deep into your eyes and says, "I'm not leaving you. I know it hurts, and I'm here."

The Lord's compassion for us is like the compassion a mother feels for her newborn child. Mothers, do you remember your newborn babies? Do you remember rocking them? walking them? Perhaps you even drove them around in the car when they couldn't sleep or were suffering from colic. You soothed them with your gentle words. Maybe you sang to them. (I can remember spending many evenings singing to an audience of one.) When you had to take them out into the cold, you dressed them warmly — wrapping them in a cocoon of blankets to protect them from the rough elements.

Our heavenly Father is just as gentle and loving. He, too, sings to us with songs of love and encouragement. He sings when we see the first robin of spring. He sings through the snow when it comes down in big fluffy flakes. He sings to us through a beautiful starlit night sky. And we hear His song as we are in the presence of friends, family, and His own gentle Spirit when we are in pain.

Why is God so compassionate?

Why does God show us so much compassion? It is because "he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust." Who but God would remember that we are dust? It was He who took the dust of the ground, made it into a clay doll, and blew into it the breath of life.

"As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on you when you're hurting. . . . He looks deep into your eyes and says, 'I'm not leaving you. I know it hurts, and I'm here.'"

But David isn't just talking about our physical form. This verse speaks of every part of us. God knows how each of us is made mentally and emotionally. He knows how we react to pain and suffering. He knows how confused we can get when pain and suffering come our way. *And He cares.*

When Rebekah was going through her skin-prick test, I could see in her eyes that she wanted to cry. But she didn't want to embarrass herself in front of the person doing the testing. So I whispered to her, "It's okay, honey, go ahead and cry." The tears came immediately, and she cried hard.

Had I not given her permission to cry, she might have kept all that emotion inside, unable to express the hurt she was feeling. But I know how my daughter is formed, and out of compassion for her, I gave her the permission she needed to express her pain and frustration through her tears. By telling her to cry, I was saying that she wasn't going to embarrass herself and that we wouldn't think any less of her for crying. I was assuring her that I loved her no matter what.

Is it all right for us to cry?

Do you think God ever says to us, "Go ahead and cry"? I think he does. I believe that when we're suffering, He's already crying for us. He has felt the pain we feel. He knows the confusion and frustration we feel. And just in case some of you men think that it's not "manly" to cry, let me remind you that the manliest person ever to live, Jesus Christ, wept openly at the death of His friend and over the unbelief of His people.

To say that God cares "for he knows how we are formed" is the understatement of the ages. He cares because He *felt* our pain. He was frail as we are frail. For about 33 years He experienced what we experience, gaining a depth of un-

derstanding we can never fully appreciate.

He knows how we compromise when we're faced with tough choices. He knows how confusing life can get when we think that God isn't paying attention, for He Himself cried, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He knows how it feels to be deserted; how it feels when adoration turns to hatred. He knows. And He cares.

When Rebekah was crying, I wanted to grab her off that table and hold her close. I wanted to shout, "Stop it! You're hurting my daughter!" But I didn't. I allowed the painful testing to proceed, all the while comforting and soothing Rebekah with my touch and my words. I knew that the testing would yield results that would help her be the best Rebekah she can be. I knew that the pain, though intense at the time, would pass, and that she would be a better person for having endured it.

It seems strange to say it, but I cared enough for my little girl that I allowed a total stranger to hurt her for more than two hours because I knew that the future benefits of the testing would, in the long run, far outweigh the pain of the present. Even though my heart was breaking to see her suffer, I allowed it.

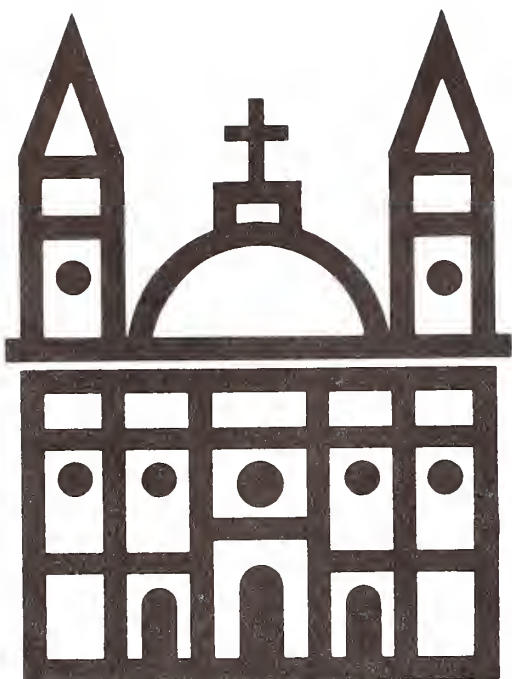
Does God care? When Satan is poking at us and our life circumstances are painful, does God care? I believe He cares more about our suffering than we care about the suffering of our children. He cares in ways we can't begin to fathom. His heart breaks just as our hearts break when our children are hurting or confused. He longs to pull us up on His lap and comfort us. He longs to gather us to Himself as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. He longs to show us His compassion, a compassion that surpasses any other we have ever known. [†]

He Cares

Oh, wonderful story of deathless love;
Each child is dear to that Heart above.
He fights for me when I cannot fight,
He comforts me in the gloom of night,
He lifts the burden, for he is strong,
He stills the sigh and awakes the song;
The sorrow that bows me down he bears,
And loves and pardons, because he cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again;
We are not alone in our hours of pain;
Our Father stoops from his throne above
To soothe and quiet us with his love.
He leaves us not when the storm is high,
And we have safety, for he is nigh.
Can it be trouble that he doth share?
Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord doth care!

Susan Coolidge, 1845-1905



Heavenly Priorities For Our Walk on Earth

By Mark R. Littleton

whole tenor of scripture, seeking to boil it all down to a few clear issues about what God considers important.

I see at least five priorities in the life of Jesus, the teaching of Paul, and the rest of scripture.

1. Worship

John MacArthur, in his book by the same title (Moody Press, 1983), calls worship "The Ultimate Priority." The Great Commandment to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and might is a call to worship. Jesus told the woman at the well that God seeks worshipers who will worship Him "in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:22-24). God's eyes rove throughout the earth looking for people "whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chron. 16:9). He intends to support them.

Clearly, worship is a top priority item. More importantly, it's possible to make nearly everything in life an act of worship — from playing softball to enjoying a New York strip steak to a pause on the subway to give thanks. If we take Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 seriously, we will

rejoice always,

pray without ceasing,

and give thanks in everything as a pattern of life. That is the essence of worship.

Obedience is a part of worship as well. Any way in which we're consciously obeying Him on the basis of His word qualifies as an act of worship. That ranges from doing a good job at work to your attitude as you put the dishes into the dish drainer.

In effect, given the right attitude and mind-set, we can worship God

throughout the whole day. Even sleep can be an act of worship as we "rest in the Lord."

Of course, all those hard-won habits of Bible memorization, Bible study, prayer, having a quiet time, special study, family worship, and so on add minutes of our days to the living out of this priority. Knowing and learning of God becomes something we do as naturally as breathing.

I'm not trying to stretch it here. But the truth is that if worship is God's priority, it can be our priority too. It's a matter of attitude and effort.

2. The Development of Character

This second priority relates to sanctification and the development of holiness in our lives. As Paul told the Thessalonians, God's will is "your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3). God orders all the events of our lives in order to develop us in holiness and character. He gives us opportunities to serve and to do good works. He puts us through trials and tribulations. It is all designed to "conform us to the image of Christ" (Rom. 8:29).

In the matter of time, our priority is submission to God's plan to make us holy. When we understand that He who started "a good work in us" is bringing it to completion in Christ (Phil. 1:6), we can relax.

It's more important how we react and live than how much we make and do. Making a million dollars before age 40 isn't the issue; how we use the ten we have is. Reaching the top of the ladder at our company matters little; but the integrity with which we conduct

A CATHEDRAL in Milan, Italy, features a remarkable entrance in which you pass through three doors in succession. Each door has an arch with an inscription on it. Over the first door, stone-etched and wreathed in roses, it says, "All which pleases is but for a moment." The second arch pictures a cross with the engraving, "All which troubles is but for a moment." The climax comes with the third and largest doorway into the sanctuary. The inscription reads, "That only is important which is eternal."*

How do we plug into that "which is eternal"? How do we begin to focus on what is important and stick with it?

What we need to ask is, "What does God want us to regard as life's highest priorities?"

The problem is that no single passage of scripture spells out a list of priorities. Paul's statements in Philippians 3 come close. Jesus' prayer in John 17 offers more insight into God's mind. But I think, ultimately, we have to take the

*Read in the December 1979 issue of *Our Daily Bread*.

Mr. Littleton is a free-lance writer who lives in Hunt Valley, Md.

This article was adapted by the author from his book, *Escaping the Time Crunch*, published in 1990 by Moody Press.

business cuts ice with God. Hurtling through the house doing the dusting, washing, vacuuming, and ironing in six hours flat doesn't touch heaven unless your heart "sang and made melody to the Lord" and you "gave thanks" in all things to the Lord (Eph. 5:19-20).

3. Discipleship

Jesus' last command to the 120 was to "make disciples" (Matt. 28:19). Yet, how many Christians come even close to making one disciple in their lifetime, let alone disciples?

Yet, this is a top priority item in God's outlook. This priority includes all the other elements of preaching the word and leading people to Christ.

The time crunch in this area is astounding. Christians spend their time in the big splash: big socials, big seminars; big congregations; big Sunday school classes. But big-ness clearly isn't better.

Jesus did not spend most of His time with the 5,000 men who were fed, or even the 72 who went out to evangelize. Rather, His priority was twelve men. Within the twelve there were three — James, John, and Peter — into whom Jesus poured His life. But with those men, Jesus turned the world upside down.

If time management is the issue of "achieving maximum results in minimum time," as Ted Engstrom has said in *The Work Trap*, then discipleship exceeds the results. You get greater results by concentrating on less.

4. Meeting Real Needs

This principle sounds a little strange at first, but it's the priority of serving and loving your neighbor as yourself. Giving your attention to the real needs of what J. Grant Howard calls "your significant neighbors" — your family, church, immediate house neighbors, and coworkers — is important in God's eyes. This means helping people wherever they may be.

I say "real" needs because there are many people who have needs which are simply desires, preferences, or demands. They're not "real" matters of spiritual

growth, personal health, and survival. Meeting "real" needs calls for the utmost in spiritual discernment.

One friend I interviewed for this article told me, "The area of ministry (study and people time) has always been a challenge for me to avoid becoming overwhelmed. I am learning to block out specific time (on my calendar) each week for study and to make one, maybe two, dates to be with people in need or in relationship building. In the last six months one of these has been for 'hospice' volunteer work, so I can be with the unsaved."

It just so happens that this same person found time to disciple me as a young "long-hair hippie radical" more than seventeen years ago. The effects of her work are still with me.

But beyond discipleship, she was always a ready source of help, counsel, friendship, and love. I remember many times simply walking over to her house for a "chat," breaking in on her day at any point. She always had time for me.

5. Quality of Work

Again, this one didn't come to me easily. But I have recently been learning as a writer the value of qualitative versus quantitative work. Quality lasts. Often the things produced in quantity are out in a corner in the garage!

When God said, "It is good," after each of the seven creative days, He was commenting on quality. But don't let the word *good* deceive you. In our day, *good* "ain't so hot." But in Hebrew terminology, *good* was the ultimate achievement.

Our priority should be to do "good" works, to speak "good" words, to think "good" thoughts. Quality is paramount. Shoddiness is the easy route. Slipshod is simple. But to produce something that lasts and has true eternal value is a double achievement.

These five priorities can become a concrete guideline for us in the walk of everyday life. As we live them out and fulfill them in the nip and tuck of the daily struggle, we not only accomplish God's ends, but we reap God's rewards: joy, refreshment, power. [†]

"The Great Commandment to love God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and might is a call to worship."

"It's more important how we react and live than how much we make and do. Making a million dollars before age 40 isn't the issue; how we use the ten we have is."

"Giving your attention to the real needs of . . . 'your significant neighbors' — your family, church, immediate house neighbors, and coworkers — is important in God's eyes. This means helping people wherever they may be."

Getting a Greeter Program Started

By Carolyn Copeland

Receiving a friendly smile and a warm greeting when entering a church is important not only to visitors, but also to those who attend regularly. But getting people to serve as greeters is sometimes difficult. Carolyn Copeland offers the following suggestions for "Getting a Greeter Program Started."

FOUR YEARS AGO, when I accepted the challenge of evangelism chairperson for our church, one of the first programs the pastor and I developed was the Sunday morning greeter program. The greeter program was initiated to help welcome visitors, but it also became a blessing to the entire congregation.

The ministry was announced in the church newsletter as one in which everyone could participate. We mainly sought adult greeters, although we allowed children to greet with their parents. Youth classes occasionally made greeting a class project.

Enlisting greeters

Enlisting greeters was no easy task at first. I started calling people as they were listed in the church directory and asked if they would greet during certain months. I did this at least two weeks before the first Sunday of each month. If people were reluctant to commit for a whole month, I asked if they would be willing to greet for one Sunday in the month. And since we have two services, I asked if they preferred early or late service and which location — education wing or foyer. The four greeters needed each Sunday sometimes were singles, couples, or whole families.

Sunday afternoon was a good time to telephone people, because they had just returned from church and were more receptive. I never insisted that a member take a turn. I asked those who declined if I could call them another time. Some said flatly, "It's not my thing!" Others said, "Not now. Call me later."

I enjoyed talking to those who said, "Yes, we'll be glad to serve. Put us down for the whole month." People occasionally told me how much they en-

joyed the experience. I made a mental note of those members.

I jotted notes beside the names of people who asked to be called later as well as those who refused (some people work on Sundays or have other reasons for not serving). I soon learned who in our 250-member congregation would help with the greeter program.

Reminding greeters

I gave written reminders to the greeters a week before they were to serve. I either gave the reminders to them in church on the Sunday prior to their service, or else I mailed the reminders on Monday. The reminders included where and when the greeters were to serve, as well as special instructions when needed.

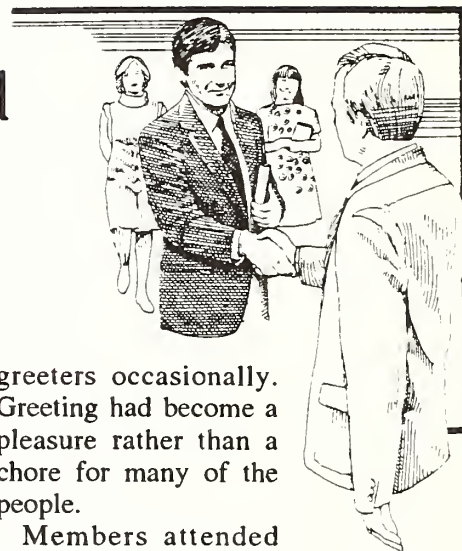
After members had served one or more times, I replaced the notices with phone calls. Only new greeters received written notes containing special instructions. The evangelism committee sent thank-you notes to greeters after they served.

I kept a greeter chart at home and at church, which made the second year easier. When I contacted people I could say, "You greeted last [name of month]. Can I count on you to greet again in [name of month]?" Most greeters volunteered for a whole month the second year. In fact, many of them eventually began signing the greeter chart without being asked, and I only had to solicit

Tips for Greeters

1. Dress appropriately and look your best. You represent the church and the Lord.
2. Arrive 15 to 20 minutes before the service.
3. Stand erect. Do not lean against a doorway or table, and don't block traffic.
4. Smile and offer your hand in greeting, but do not force people to shake hands.
5. Make people feel welcome. Introduce visitors to a few people (but don't overwhelm them by introducing them to too many).
6. Remember that your work is important. You are serving the Lord.

— Carolyn Copeland



joyed the experience. I made a mental note of those members.

Members attended more faithfully during the months they greeted. Most were there every Sunday. The greeter coordinators, however, always must be prepared to substitute.

Instructing greeters

Our requirements for greeters were pretty sketchy the first year. We asked them to arrive 15-20 minutes before services started, to smile, and to be friendly and helpful. They were asked to greet everyone who came into the church — either with a handshake or just a smile and a pleasant "good morning." We also told them to ask visitors to sign the guest book and to direct them to a Sunday school class or the sanctuary.

Greeters are urged to learn one new name each Sunday. If greeters do not know a person, they ask, "Are you a member? I don't believe I know your name. I am [greeter gives her or his own name]." If approached in this way, most people will say whether or not they are members and give their names. Some members or regular attenders resent being asked if they are visitors by greeters who don't know them.

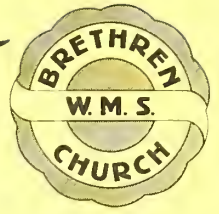
Our church became more friendly as members learned one another's names. Greeters' names were printed in the bulletins and newsletter and on their badges. Some greeters began telling members who were absent the previous week how much they were missed. This practice frequently uncovered family illnesses and other special needs, which were reported to the pastor.

Greeter programs are usually successful if greeter coordinators faithfully enlist greeters, remind them of their commitments, and thank them for serving. Remind greeters of Romans 15:7 — "Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (RSV). [†]

Mrs. Copeland is a free-lance writer who lives in Phoenix, Arizona

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



March-April 1993

Volume 6, Number 4

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

I read a story in an issue of *Our Daily Bread* about a mother who became very frustrated by the behavior of her small boy. She told him again and again to sit down, but he refused to obey. Finally, in exasperation, she plopped him into a chair and insisted that he stay put or else. Her threat must have been convincing, because after that he didn't budge an inch. But the lad wasn't about to surrender that easily. With a determined look on his face, he piped up, "I may be sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside!"

This describes how some people serve Christ. They go through the motions of religious activity, but their hearts are not in it. They never realize that, if they would surrender to the will of God, they would experience a peace and contentment they had never known. It is exciting to know that when we serve the Lord with all our hearts, He watches over us and protects us with His love. There is truly great joy and satisfaction in serving Jesus. I pray that our outward actions express our inward attitude of thankfulness to God and a sincere desire to do "that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

In January, Jim and I visited the Brethren Church of the Savior in Cleveland. Ron Williams is the pastor. It was a special day for Ron and Carolyn, as they were honored by the church for their 10 years of pastoring the church.

What an experience to attend one of their services! They are genuine in their love and devotion to Jesus Christ. You feel the excitement the moment you step into the church. They show on the outside what they feel on the inside.

Are we excited about being a member of WMS? Do we show this excitement to the women of our church? I'm afraid I have not done as much as I could to encourage women to become a
(continued on page 2)

RHODA, THE INNKEEPER'S WIFE

Devotions presented at General Conference, August 4, 1992,
by Norma Trump

Text: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2

My, what a busy day we have had! I can't remember when the traffic has been so heavy. It's been like this for several days. I wonder where everyone is coming from.

I know where they are going. You know the ruler, Caesar Augustus, decreed that this was the year for the census and everyone has to go back home to register. My husband has an inn in Bethlehem, a few miles south of Jerusalem, so we have had traffic coming and going. That census idea sure works well for us!

Believe me, it keeps me busy—cleaning the rooms and cooking meals. And everyone has animals to be bedded down, so then the stable has to be cleaned. What a life!

But I must tell you about yesterday. Crowds kept coming down the road and late in the day the rooms were filling up and I was busy fixing the evening meal. It wasn't long before I heard my husband telling people at the gate that all our rooms were filled. That was always a good sound—I imagined the coins received from the night's guests. Maybe I could go shopping soon, I certainly needed some things. At least, I think I need them, though he doesn't think so.

My husband's persistence at the gate jolted me back from day-dreaming about shopping. I plainly heard him say, "Well, I guess you can sleep in the barn." What? I peeked out the doorway in time to see a weary-looking man leading a donkey down the rough path to the barn. As if that wasn't enough, a woman was on the donkey, and I could tell she was really pregnant! She looked so tired.

At least the barn had been cleaned, but our animals were there. I didn't think it was any decent place for people to sleep. And that poor woman.

I hoped the ride hadn't been hard on her.

I finished our supper chores and thought I should check on our "guests" in the barn. I wondered how much my husband charged for that "guest" room. As I stepped out into the cool night, the sky had burst with light and a quietness was in the air. I stood amazed and overcome with shock. What was happening?

Adjusting to the brightness, I stepped carefully down the rough path and looked into the barn. If I hadn't seen it myself, I wouldn't believe it! There sat that woman holding a newborn baby and her husband was kneeling beside them. And the baby was so cute! But his clothes—no fancy baby clothes. He was wrapped in only some soft cloths. The father smiled; the mother was radiant. Actually, so was the baby. The animals looked, but stayed in the background.

I could see that the young family had everything under control, so I started back to the inn. The sky now was so bright; I am sure I could see angels. And they sang:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.

Later in the evening shepherds came from up in the hills; they were scraungy-looking and smelled of their animals, but their faces were bright in anticipation. They exclaimed that they heard the angels' song.

I remembered Micah's prophecy that out of Bethlehem will come one who will be ruler over Israel (Micah 5:2); and Isaiah said it, too. In our barn!

If only we had known, we would have . . .

Prayer: God, help me to make room for you in my life. Every day. In my life. Amen.

Missionary Miscellany

Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles have now relocated in Mexico and are attending a language school outside Mexico City. All is going well in their new locale. Their address until May 7 is:

Cuauhnahuac Es. C.I.C.L.
Attn: (Eagles) or (Ruggles)
Apdo. Postal 5-26
62051 Cuernavaca, Morelos
MEXICO

Around the world from Mexico, David and Jenny Loi have moved to begin a ministry in another area of Malaysia. Their new address is:

David and Jenny Loi Lee-Hoot
2-B Jalan Ronggang 2
Taman Skudai Baru
81300 Skudai, Johor
MALAYSIA

And continuing to India, girls have moved into their new orphanage. Remember we WMS ladies are giving funds to the National Missionary Board for the purchase of this property. This is the second year for the project and offerings will be received in August for the completion of this gift. Pray for the Kumars and the girls who live in this home.

The Springboro congregation plans to be in their new church facility by May 1. Pray for Pastor Archie Nevins and the congregation as they finish this phase of the work and seek God's leading for continued ministry.

The President's Pens (continued)

part of our WMS. It is so easy to get busy with our daily responsibilities and, before we know it, it is time for our monthly meeting and we have not invited that person we were planning to invite. Let's promise to work harder at gaining new members this year.

What has your WMS done with No. 9 of our ABC's? My circle at Park Street has sent letters to sponsors of TV programs that promote a lot of violence. We have also written letters commending broadcasting companies for airing programs that are good family programs. One of our members feels we need to let the TV stations know when something "good" is televised. We plan to continue this during the year. What has your local WMS done? Let me know, please.

Until next time, God bless you as we work together to serve Christ.

In Christian love,
Shirley Black

In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death
of his saints. Psalm 116:11

A TRIBUTE TO MARGARET LOWERY

January 30, 1910 — December 5, 1992

Many of us knew and loved Margaret. She hosted hundreds annually, some were visitors and others were workers. Each one received the same warm reception, her hearty laugh, delicious food, love, and the realization of why she was serving in southeastern Kentucky.

Marlin and Alice Oburn Garber are among the hundreds who worked with Margaret. Marlin, Ken Green, and Jim Sluss were sponsored by the Mission Board in the summer of 1965. Alice (from the Pleasant Hill, Ohio, Brethren Church) was a Crusader for six summers and several spring-breaks from college. Alice's mother, Ada Oburn, worked with Margaret, also. Marlin and Alice now reside in Salida, California, and Ada has moved recently to be near them. The Garbers wrote this tribute, which speaks for all of us.

Merry
Angel of mercy
Respected
Godly
Accomplished
Righteous
Effective
Teacher

Loving
Organized
Wise
Energetic
Responsible
Yielded

Margaret lived her life faithfully, serving her Lord and Master in such a selfless way that her mighty example will live on in the memories of all those who knew her and were privileged to work with her. Her wholehearted commitment and undaunted dedication to God's word and the people of Krypton and Perry County were outstanding.

Margaret faithfully ministered to the entire community in the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical realms. She was always available and tirelessly answered the numerous calls for assistance as the folks came to her.

It is impossible to think of Margaret without recalling her gracious hospitality and exquisite culinary skills. The many Brethren who passed through

Krypton Bible Center experienced the results of this. She also used her talent in this area to teach health and nutrition to the folks in the Appalachian region.

It was a privilege and blessing to work with her and to learn from her examples of promptness, organization, a joyous spirit, and a disciplined life.

When the time comes that we are left with memories, we are blessed to have memories of a servant like Margaret. Memories that spur us to greater service in the time we have left here on earth. We thank God for Margaret and her ministry.

SEWING UPDATE

I hope all of you are working on your quilt squares for future projects. Here's a review of the guidelines:

- Please make the squares at least 8½ inches square.
- The design should be less than 8 inches and centered on the square.
- All-cotton fabric is preferable.
- No liquid embroidery or fabric paints, please. The quality of the quilted items is enhanced by the needlework, embroidery, applique, cross stitch, etc.
- Please have all squares to me by April 1.
- If you have any questions, ideas, or suggestions concerning the quilt squares or quilt projects, please feel free to contact me.

God bless you.

Joan Merrill
9300 S. SR 3
Muncie, Indiana 47302
(317) 289-2384

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

Mrs. Dorman Ronk, Editor
1325 Carriage Hill Court
Ashland, Ohio 44805

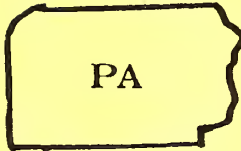
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Woman's Outlook Newsletter

District Doings

From the Pennsylvania District, Jane Yoder, president, reported:



Sarver conducted a soup sale and netted \$207; packed Thanksgiving food boxes for five families.

Pleasant View began the year with four new members; they sell napkins and have plans for a soup sale. They are in prayer to see what the Lord has in store for them this year.

Valley had a bake sale with a profit of \$210 and they sold 2-year calendars. They cleaned the church fellowship hall in preparation for a Learning Center for the younger children.

From North Georgetown, Ohio, Carolyn Brandon wrote of the activities of the Carrie Stoffer Society:



Under the leadership of our President, Arlene Raber, we are sewing for the Flora Brethren Home at our meetings every other month. We have completed 12 lap robes at this time. We also send monthly offerings to Lost Creek, Kentucky, and clothes with Rev. Lowmaster twice a year. We have sent money to Concerned Women of America to fight the homosexual bill before the Senate.

In October we spent two days baking apple dumplings to sell for our project offering for the girls' orphanage in India. In September we had a white elephant auction to pay our dues.

Since David and Diane Kerner were our pastor and wife while preparing for missionary service at the Ashland Seminary, we sent them money for their Christmas shopping. We also helped a young widow with 3 young sons at Christmas.

It is our hope and prayer to see a new younger group begin in the future.



Reports have come from the two societies in Milledgeville, Illinois:

The Brethren Beacons enjoyed an all-day sewing in January combined with their devotional meeting. Margaret Graehling gave devotions and Marion

Haugh, using a chalkboard, explained the study "Attainable Peace." Lucile

Woessner read Wonderful Peace with piano accompaniment by Marion, and Lenora Blummer read Seeking Peace. Their sewing projects included lap robes, stuffed animals, and repairing clothing brought from a nursing home.

The Priscilla Circle gave the worship service at the Good Samaritan nursing home in December. Doretta Newendyke gave special music; Betty Wiersema and Malynnda Hutchison read the Scriptures; Wendy Wiersema read poetry; and Melva Staples gave the message on "The Other Wiseman."

The Central District project is to provide funds for the purchase of sewing machines for the India orphanage. These two societies have combined efforts for raising funds for the project.

SOUTHERN INDIANA DISTRICT RALLY



The ladies of the Wabash Church were hostesses for the southern Indiana district rally in October. Phyllis Meyer reported:

The theme of the day was "The Light of the World is Jesus," based on John 8:12. That was also the hymn of the day. Mary Ellen Miller from Roann gave the devotions; Martha Barker from North Manchester and Melissa Snyder gave special music. The guest speaker was Jackie Weaver, who spoke and showed several of her drawings. As the project offerings were received, one from each society told of its accomplishments during the year. The project offering totaled \$432.64.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The three societies (Faith, Hope, Joy) at Ashland Park Street combined for their public service last June. Following a fellowship supper of sandwiches and fruit, Shirley Black welcomed members and guests. Norma and Ron Waters gave testimonies for WMS; Norma, as a member for many years, told of the benefits she receives and her opportunities to give. Ron, never a member, spoke from the denominational standpoint and the worthy contributions the national Woman's Missionary Society makes to the denomination. Through its offerings to both home and world missions, the Seminary, the University, and through prayer and personnel, the WMS is a strong force in The Brethren Church.

Special music was sung by Ella Mae Johnson (Judi Gentle's mother), who was visiting from Santa Cruz, California.

Bobbi Gilmer introduced the speaker, Jan Rinehart, who spoke of her experiences as a Fulbright Scholar in Egypt and Israel during the summer of 1991. For six weeks, Jan was one of 17 American educators who lived among the people in Egypt and Israel, ate and traveled with them. It was primarily an academic tour but among the 17 were two conservative Christians who saw prophecy being fulfilled rapidly, and "It was exciting." Jan was dressed in a gabalaya, an Egyptian dress that the young ladies wear. It was a white cotton sheath with beautiful cording and exquisite embroidery. Jan has many mementoes which she uses in her classroom for a very practical application of world events.

Incidentally, Jan is available to speak for other groups. You may contact her at 1362 Hillcrest, Ashland, Ohio 44805 (419-289-0033).

Jennifer Keyes, vice president of the Mexico, Indiana, society reported on their public service, held October 4.

Janie Hattery, president, gave a brief history of WMS and told of the local society's projects. The program was presented by Ross and Norma Trump, members of the Roann Brethren Church. The Trumps presented a musical program, playing a variety of instruments and singing several songs. Norma told the story of Jonah from Mrs. Jonah's point of view. The Trumps are available also for services. Contact them at Route 1, Box 186, North Manchester, Indiana 46962. The society celebrated their 100th anniversary and displayed old *Outlooks* and programs, in addition to the secretary's books dating back to 1911. They concluded with a carry-in dinner.



HERE'S AN IDEA

The Sarver society alternated day and evening meeting times, so those working were able to attend part of the time.

Ten ladies from the Mexico, Indiana, society enjoyed their annual overnight trip to Nashville, Indiana, October 22-23. They visited the shops in Nashville and hiked in nearby Brown County State Park.

Questions & Answers

Q:

Am I paying for the *Newsletter* twice — once with my dues and once with my *Evangelist* subscription? And, isn't the *Newsletter* more expensive, since it is included in the *Evangelist*?

A:

With the answers to those questions, JoAnn Seaman, treasurer, wrote:

These are important questions! A review of our present arrangement and its benefits is in order.

At the November 1990 WMS Executive Board meeting, Ron W. Waters expressed his desire to have the *Evangelist* reach more Brethren households. He discovered that about 400 receive the *Newsletter*, but 750 WMS ladies do not receive the *Evangelist*. By placing the *Newsletter* in the *Evangelist*, The Brethren Church is able to reach 400 more families.

The WMS receives many benefits from the arrangement:

(1) The *Outlook Newsletter* reaches approximately 3,000 more families than before. More men are reading and taking an interest in our activities. More women are learning "what is WMS?" We could never afford this type of advertising; yet we are getting it "free."

(2) The price of our *Newsletter* is held in check. The Brethren Church charges us about the same as when we mailed our publication separately. Now the price could be higher, if we were on our own.

(3) We have more usable space in our *Newsletter*, since we do not have to leave room for the mailing label.

Let's also review how our dues are used. They underwrite much more than the *Outlook Newsletter*. When you pay your dues, you also finance:

(1) the WMS Devotional Guide,
(2) Conference/Administration expenses, and
(3) part of our benevolence giving.

The Woman's Missionary Society is an assistant for The Brethren Church. When you don't pay your dues, you weaken the Church's helper. When you do contribute, the whole church benefits.

We should be thankful The Brethren Church is helping us to be wise stewards of God's money. It is a mutually beneficial situation.

Q:

Can the time schedule be adjusted? We don't receive the *Newsletter* in time to use at our meeting.

A:

This answer is from me, the editor:

That's right! The Devotional Guide is the source of material for your monthly meeting and the *Newsletter* is the in-between communication. Actually, it is a "personal" letter to you from me, and carries news from other societies, information about our missionaries, devotions, and suggestions. This is the supplement to news from your meeting. When I write the Editor's Ending and say "Dear Friend," I am writing to you.

I appreciate hearing about the opportunities of service from the local societies and I hope their suggestions may be helpful to you, too.

One of your suggestions will be acted upon this spring. At the May Executive Board meeting, the reading circle books are considered and recommended. When they are included in the July-August *Newsletter*, your society may not be able to make its decision before your delegates come for Conference. This year I will send the list of suggested books to the local president after the May Board meeting. I hope this will alleviate a problem.

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

Do you ever think of word association? What word leads you on to the next thought which may seem very unrelated? That is how this began.

I was mixing up a gift at Christmas-time and I mentally checked off kitchen gifts which needed to be prepared. I was stirring up a gift. Then I thought—stir up the gift. There is a difference. "A" means a thing in general, "the" means a particular thing. And I remembered Paul's message to Timothy: *Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.* II Timothy 1:6

Paul's laying on of hands for Timothy's ordination and my kitchen

have nothing in common. However, my kitchen is a good place for thinking! And I began to consider "stir up the gift which is in thee." These may be special abilities and talents, they may be teaching, praying, listening, hugging, writing or reading to another, listening or crying with someone. The specific gift is yours to give, only you can do it in your unique way. So stir it up and make someone else happy. It is in giving that we receive. Or, in Jesus' words: *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

In the November-December *Newsletter*, I listed three chaplains who are very special people. I am sorry that I omitted one, who is also very special. Please add David Graetz to your list for prayers and encouragement notes. David is an Army chaplain in a veterans' hospital.

Chaplain David Graetz (Gale)
1907 Westmoreland Way
Louisville, KY 40242

Some of us remember the days before the computer, when a person came to the door to count and record the people who resided there. Every ten years and all over the country, these counters were taking the census. Today's computerized records—even that old system—are an improvement over the system when Jesus was born. Imagine the difficulties of traveling to your birthplace to be counted. Norma Trump gave an eyewitness account, when she portrayed Rhoda, the innkeeper's wife. Remember, this is an adaptation; Norma's material was copyrighted.

When you think about your spring wardrobe:

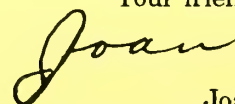
*Consider the lilies of the field,
how they grow; they toil not,
neither do they spin; And yet I
say unto you, That even
Solomon in all his glory was
not arrayed like one of these.*

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount included these words, which are recorded in Matthew 6, and emphasize the simple and lovely beauty found in the world.

Dear God, keep us from being so preoccupied with materialistic things that we miss your beauty.

"Forgive our foolish ways.
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise."

Your friend,



Joan



The Gospel: A World Need

— Year 101 for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church —

By Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director
Missionary Board of the Brethren Church

I BELIEVE one of the most challenging missionary passages in the New Testament to be the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 10: "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1, *NIV*). What a great heart for evangelism this man had! What an extraordinary love for his people!

Evangelism a low priority

It is at best unfortunate that so many people who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ have so little desire to share His love with others. This seems to be true not only of individuals, but also of certain churches (congregations) and even of some denominations. Evangelism, especially world evangelism, would seem to be low on the list of their priorities. (I hope I'm not talking to you.)

You will admit that we live in a world desperately in need of the gospel. We have been commissioned to disciple the peoples of that world (Matt. 28:18-20), and yet we seem to be ever-struggling to get the job done. Is it that we really do not believe in the lostness of humankind outside of Jesus Christ and His saving grace?

I consider myself to be very fortunate in that I have been privileged to travel a great deal and to observe first hand a number of cultures of this world. As I traveled, it soon became obvious to me that many things change from culture to culture. We find differences in food and in the way it is eaten. There are differences in the way we dress, in the kinds of houses we live in, and even in the length of preachers' messages.

But while so many things are different, many other things are the same. As one travels from culture to culture, country to country, one becomes aware that people everywhere are in

sin and need to know the possibility of forgiveness. There are millions who fear punishment because of sin.

Dr. K. Prasanth Kumar, Director of Brethren Mission in India, has said that in India many Hindu people are so afraid of sin's punishment and hell that they worship Satan along with their many other gods. They worship him to get on his good side just in case hell is real and they are lost. How tragic!

People everywhere are discouraged, searching, really wanting to have a hope that reaches beyond this life. There are hurting, dying, desperate people for whom the promise of Jesus' love and forgiveness is welcome news. Yes, we need to do our best to feed, clothe, and care for the physical needs of hurting humanity. But we must never neglect to offer them hope that surpasses a filled stomach and healthy body. They need hope that goes beyond this human existence.

The true source of hope

The Christian knows where such hope is found. It is found not in human efforts; not in changing governments; not in war and conflict; not in great wealth nor in abject poverty. This hope is not even found in "religion." There are many religions. Religion is but mankind's search for God. Bill Hybels once said, "Religion is do; Christianity is done." The hope that matters is found in a person, and that person is Jesus Christ.

The Brethren Church has always believed in the urgency of sharing the message of the gospel. The Missionary Board this year enters its 101st year of continuous service, having been incorporated in the State of Illinois in 1892. It is interesting to note that in the year of our incorporation, the "modern missionary movement" was celebrating its centennial year. William Carey launched his 40-year missionary career

in the year 1792. In that year he published his treatise, "An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen." The chapters of that treatise dealt with the Great Commission, historical precedents, a world survey, obstacles to missions, and the Christian's duty to promote the cause of missions. This treatise is a valid study even for today.

A commendable work

For a small denomination, The Brethren Church has done a commendable work in missions. Our influence has been felt in many countries of the world through the efforts of scores of missionary servants. Today, in year 101 of our ministry, the Brethren are working in seven countries of the world outside of the United States, namely in Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Paraguay, Argentina, Malaysia, and India. In addition, initial steps have been taken to carry the message of the gospel through The Brethren Church to Japan, Korea, and Russia.

The task before us is great, nearly overwhelming. But God's mandate to Christians continues to be to disciple the world. There are still unreached people, those who have never heard the gospel. We as a Brethren Church must find a way to become more involved in this area of the "unknown." We may have to work through other denominations or organizations, since we are not equipped (at least not now) for such endeavors. But we must not fear new frontiers of ministry.

When will our Lord return? This we do not know. But our task will be finished only when He does return or when the entire world has been disciplined. May God grant an increase of commitment for each of us as together we strive to be faithful to His call to the church. [†]



A Letter From Malaysia

From Rev. David and Jenny Loi
Brethren Missionaries in Malaysia

Dear Beloved Brethren,

Our love and greetings to you all in the blessed name of our wonderful Lord. On behalf of our family and the Brethren in Malaysia, we express our deep appreciation to all of you for your faithful prayer support, generous giving and many greeting cards and letters.

It is a real pleasure to write and share the mission work here with you and to know that our Lord is using us for His glory. Following are some of the major events of 1992.

On April 21, Pastor David Chew had the opportunity to help with the funeral service of a 91-year-old man, Mr. Ong, who lived just a few blocks from Pastor Chew's residence. He was a Christian from China who had no family members living nearby. For many years he lived by himself. His relatives requested a Christian burial for him. Some churches turned them down because the deceased was not attached to any church. Finally, they came to Pastor Chew for help.

Without hesitation Pastor Chew agreed to take charge of the funeral service. That same day was the anniversary of the death of Pastor Chew's own mother. They had a special service at Pastor Chew's home, and the funeral service/evangelistic meeting was arranged in the evening. About 30 relatives and friends attended. On the next afternoon, another short service was held before the deceased was moved to the crematorium. Pastor Chew was glad that he had this opportunity to preach the gospel to the lost.

Another special baptism

Mr. Ooi King-Sing is an old clothes and newspaper collector and salesman who began attending our church in the Ong Joo San area of Penang last April. He liked our church doctrine and attended our Holy Communion service



Baptism day (May 17, 1992) for Mr. Kao Nan-Huat (center, in white baptismal robe). One week after his death on June 14, his wife (at his left) and their four daughters (in front of and behind their parents) were also baptized. Pastor David Chew and his wife Lily are at the far left in the front row.

on April 16. He felt the service was very meaningful.

In May, Ooi King-Sing called Pastor Chew to tell him that his brother-in-law, Mr. Kao Nan-Huat, wanted to accept Christ and to be baptized. The next day, Pastor Chew went to meet Mr. Kao and his family. Though just 42 years old, the man looked to be 60 because he was very ill. Since he could not walk, Pastor Chew drove him back and forth to services.

After Mr. Kao had attended three services, Pastor Chew arranged for him to be baptized on Sunday, May 17. He was overjoyed with the baptismal service. His wife witnessed that she had never seen him so happy before, and she was touched by his decision. She promised that she and her four daughters would follow her husband's footsteps to receive Christ and be baptized in the near future.

Following this baptism, Pastor Chew and other church members visited Mr. Kao and his family frequently. Rev. Chew conducted an anointing service

for Mr. Kao in order to strengthen and increase the family's faith in the Lord. Then Mrs. Kao asked the church to destroy the family's idols. Pastor Chew and other church members spent some time in prayer. Then they burned the idols and presented the family a cross to replace them. Praise the Lord!

The Lord showed mercy to Mr. Kao. Though continuing to feel weak, he didn't feel much pain. He confessed that receiving Christ as his personal savior and being baptized was one of his greatest blessings. On Sunday, June 14, he and his family attended our morning worship service. Then that afternoon Mr. Kao passed peacefully away. Praise the Lord, the gospel message was shared with his relatives and friends during the funeral service!

After the service and just before the burial, the relatives requested that the congregation sing some of the hymns again. Thank the Lord that only God and the hymns could bring peace and comfort to these people.

For two nights following the burial,

Mrs. Lily Chew stayed at the home of Mrs. Kao. On one of those nights, Mrs. Kao dreamed that her husband, dressed in white, came and said good-bye to her. She woke up afraid, and Mrs. Chew comforted and prayed with her. Mrs. Kao and her four daughters decided to be baptized on June 21. There were some objections from their relatives, but the Lord was merciful, and with much prayer and the encouragement of the church, they received baptism. Praise the Lord for this victory!

An exorcism

On June 15 Pastor Chew's neighbor, Madam Kang Beng-See, asked him for help because her son, Yeo Eng-Han, was demon-possessed. All the family members were staunch Buddhists except for a sister who resided in Singapore. This sister had become a Christian while studying in New Zealand. The family had decided to arrange for a Buddhist priest to perform the ritual to cast out the demons, but Madam Kang phoned her sister in Singapore for a second opinion. The sister thought that Christians could offer the best help.

The sister, Kang Beng-Yu, flew to Penang and asked Pastor Chew for help. David and Lily Chew shared with them the word of God, and they sang hymns, and prayed together until 2 a.m. The Chews also spent the next two evenings with them. Then Pastor Chew requested the whole family to

fast on Sunday, June 21, and to attend the worship service. During that service, Pastor Chew laid hands on Eng-Han and prayed to God to cast out the demons. The whole family was very touched and thankful for what God had done.

A baptism service was arranged during my administrative trip to Penang in November. Praise the Lord, Madam Kang Beng-See and her two children, Yeoh Eng-Han (16) and Yeoh Wan-Yee (13) were baptized during the morning service on November 21. I shared a message with the congregation, and the baptism took place at the Baptist Theological Seminary beach. I was thrilled to be a part of the service.

In Malaysia, the school year begins in December, so on December 1, 1992, we again opened the Ashland Kindergarten at Taman Selesa Jaya. The kindergarten began five years ago, but ceased operation because of lack of students and other circumstances.

During a survey, the residents of this area voiced a need for a kindergarten. So far 23 children have enrolled. The curriculum includes English, Chinese, and Malay languages, Bible stories, hymns, moral education, general knowledge, handicrafts, and outdoor activities. Morning tea is provided during recess, and grace is said before the snack. A few of these children also attend the church school which is held every Saturday afternoon.

An invitation was extended to all the

parents of the kindergarten children to attend our Christmas Day celebration. About 70 people attended this gathering, including a few of the kindergarten students and their parents. The Good Tidings were shared with all. We are hoping and praying that we will gradually be able to minister to the children and their parents, to win their hearts for Christ.

A new location

By the time you read this article, we will have moved to our new location. Our new address for future correspondence is: 2-B Jalan Ronggang 2, Taman Skudai Baru, Skudai, 81300 Skudai, Johor, MALAYSIA.

Our move to this area was influenced by one of my dear friends in Johor Baru, Rev. John Sewi. He shared with me his vision for Skudai and the good prospects for growth in this area. After much prayer and his persuasion, we decided to move to this area. We will try to give you more information regarding new developments here. Please support us with your prayers as we begin this new ministry.

Finally, thank you again for your important part in the Brethren Mission here. May the Lord be glorified and His kingdom be expanded by your continued participation in and support of the ministry in Malaysia. May you all be richly anointed with His blessings.

Your partners in His ministry,
David and Jenny Loi

Brethren World Missions

A Progress Report From India

By Dr. K. Prasanth Kumar
Director, Brethren Mission in India



THE BRETHREN CHURCH in India was blessed in 1992 with another fruitful year for the glory of the Lord.

One of the highlights of the year was the Brethren National Convention, conducted January 24-26 at the village of Nedunuru.

A month later, on February 29 and March 1, youth revival meetings were conducted in Rajahmundry, which had a great impact on the youth. In all, 107 young boys and girls attended these

meetings from various villages, and eight young people committed their lives to the Lord and were baptized.

We have made the youth a point of concentration throughout the year. We seek to provide them with spiritual food during their monthly meetings and are regularly giving them counseling. They are much encouraged to grow in the Lord and to use their talents for the glory of God.

During the 40-day period from Ash Wednesday until Easter, we conducted

Lenten cottage prayer meetings in both Vizak and Rajahmundry. Many people fasted and prayed during this period. This was also a special time of spreading the message of sin and salvation, and many people were drawn to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

The majority of people in India live in villages. Nirmala and I visited 47 villages, reaching the idol-worshippers there with the truth of the gospel and praying for the sick and the barren. The Lord touched and enlightened the

hearts of the new believers in these villages.

In November we made the village of Narkidi Milli a focal point of gospel witness. We held three days of revival meetings there November 1-3. The Lord blessed these endeavors, as 14 people accepted Jesus Christ as their savior and were baptized.

During the year church buildings were built in the village of Katavaram and Hukumpeta, and prayer houses were built in Narkidi Milli and Velagada, Mulakalanka. These buildings were all dedicated to the glory of God. From June until December 31, 1992, we were able to reach another 83 people for Christ, making the total number of baptized members 3,131.

December was a very busy time of the year. On December 4 and 5, training for laymen was held in Rajahmundry. The laity were trained and encouraged to give short messages, conduct small prayer meetings, collect prayer requests, visit non-Christian homes, and lead an exemplary life.

Then from December 6 to January 10, Nirmala and I visited the villages nightly to conduct Christmas gospel meetings. Though we had long cold nights on the road, the gospel that was shared yielded good fruit.

I was also invited by the All India Radio to broadcast Christian messages, and I presented a special Christmas radio message on December 24.

The youth took the lead in sharing the message of Christ through Christmas playlets. These were presented in Vizak on December 23 and in Rajahmundry on December 25.

Special ministries

In addition to the activities described above, a number of special ministries were carried on throughout the year. They included the following:

Publishing. *Suvarthikudu* (the *Evangelist*) is a monthly magazine published with Indian contributions that carries articles that speak to the spiritual needs of everyone in the family. Many gospel tracts are also printed or purchased, and these are distributed to the sick at the Brethren Hospital, in the homes of non-Christians, and to people on the streets.

Bible Institute. This year we are training ten people in the Brethren Bible Institute. They are being trained



Rev. Prasanth Kumar prays for the young people who came forward during the youth revival meetings to accept Christ and receive baptism.

in biblical theology and in effective means of reaching the unreached in the villages where they will be working as preachers and evangelists at different preaching points.

Child Evangelism. We have renewed the Child Evangelism program in Rajahmundry and Vizak. The children are trained spiritually by age-group using visual aids and Bible video cassettes. A wonderful children's rally was conducted February 15-16 at Rajahmundry in which approximately 500 children were nurtured in the word of God through Bible stories, video cassettes, a quiz program, and Bible songs.

Orphanages. In addition to evangelism, social concerns are an important part of our ministry. We are pleased to have 30 boys in the Boys' Orphanage and ten girls in the Girls' Orphanage. These children came from different religious backgrounds, but now they know Jesus, read the Bible, and sing songs of praise to Him. Some of them play musical instruments in the worship services.

Because of the orphanage, many poor young boys have come up in their lives and have received appointments to positions in various fields. Some of them have become teachers, some preachers, and some are in positions in the Brethren Mission itself.

We are thankful to the National W.M.S. for providing funds to buy a building for the girls' orphanage. The girls are now very comfortable in the new building.

Training programs. Under a self-help program, many poor widows and unemployed women are given free sewing training and some of these then receive new sewing machines. This year eight poor women received sewing machines and are now able to earn a living. In addition, 36 poor young people were given free typewriting training and took the government examination to qualify for good jobs, which many of them received.

Brethren Hospital. The Brethren Mission Hospital renders free medical service to about 150 poor, sick people every day at Rajahmundry. On August 23 we accompanied the medical staff to the village of Katavaram, where we diagnosed their diseases, gave necessary medicines, and distributed nutritious milk-food bottles to malnourished mothers and children.

The 20th anniversary of the hospital was celebrated on September 26. Members of the hospital staff were given gifts for their faithful service, and milk-food bottles were distributed to the patients. A Moped was presented to Mr. K. Ratna Raju to enable him to go to villages to render free medical service.

For every good thing bestowed upon the Brethren Mission in Indian, we thank our good Lord. And we praise our good Lord for helping us carry out the desire of the Brethren in the United States — to fulfill the command of the Lord to go and preach the gospel to the nations. [†]

Pennsylvania District Youth Advisors Meet For Weekend Training Retreat in January

Vandergrift, Pa. — Sixteen local youth advisors from the Pennsylvania District met for a weekend retreat January 29–31 at the Pleasant View Brethren Church in Vandergrift.

The retreat was led by Deb Ritchey, Administrative Assistant for Education/Leadership/Youth for The Brethren Church, and Sherry Bowling, National Youth Ministry Associate.

The event began Friday evening with lively music by Pastor Keith Hensley and T.J. McLaughlin of the Pleasant View Church. This was followed by several get-acquainted games introduced by Deb and Sherry. The rest of the evening was spent visiting and snacking.

Saturday started off with a delicious breakfast prepared by Elaine and Chris Sampson of the Cameron, W.Va., Brethren Church, who fed the group very well throughout the weekend. Devotions followed, led by District Advisor Dordi John, and singing led by Linda Barr, Pennsylvania District Youth Ministry Associate, and by T.J. McLaughlin.

Deb and Sherry took over for the remainder of the morning and the afternoon. During this time the youth advisors worked through an abridged version of the Myers-Briggs Inventory, then viewed and had a lively discussion of two videos, "Looking at the World Through Teenage Eyes" and "When You Don't Like Who Your Teen is Becom-

ing." They also spent some time talking about the legal aspects of youth ministry (reporting child abuse, requiring permission slips for trips, etc.), viewed and discussed the latest resources for working with youth, received information about various aspects of youth ministry in The Brethren Church, then evaluated what they had done thus far.

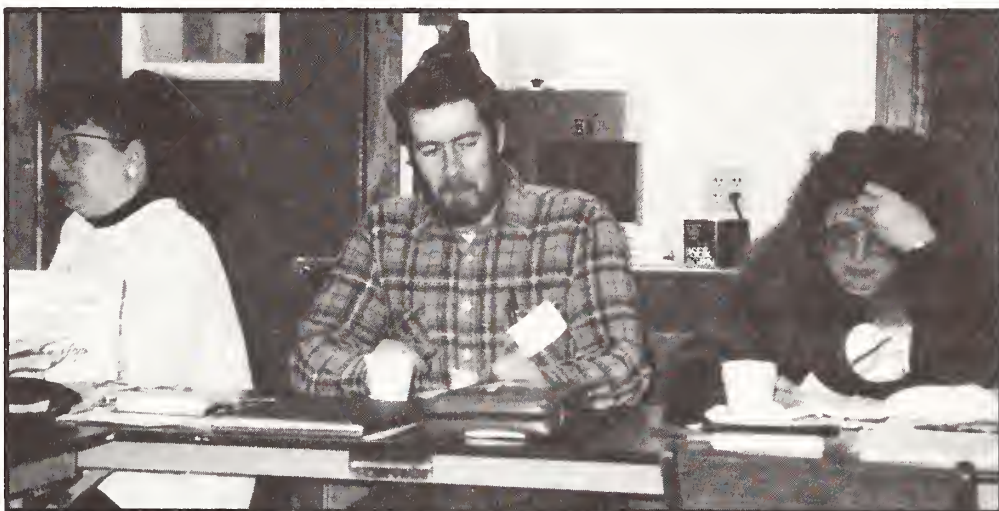
During the Saturday evening session the advisors chose prayer partners, then spent some time with those partners praying for their various concerns. They also viewed a video of the

district work trip to Lost Creek, Ky., and of the district camp rally and senior camp, and shared pictures of their local youth groups and of district functions. The evening climaxed with a Communion service led by District Advisor Pastor Ralph John.

The advisors concluded the retreat Sunday morning by attending the early worship service of the Pleasant View Church.

"Although none of us got much sleep," reports District YMA Linda Barr, "we had a very inspiring weekend. We went home refreshed and ready to tackle with renewed enthusiasm our youth work. We eagerly anticipate another such retreat next year!"

— reported by Linda Barr



Debbie and Clair Knappenberger (l. and c.), youth superintendents at the Pleasant View Church, and Jan Sensenbaugh, junior youth advisor at the Hagerstown, Md., First Brethren Church, get ready for another session of the youth advisors' retreat.

Communion Service at Cheyenne Includes "Family Footwashing"

By Rev. G. Emery Hurd, Pastor

Cheyenne, Wyo. — The Cheyenne Brethren Church initiated a new concept during its Communion service held November 8, 1992 — the practice of "family footwashing." During the observance of footwashing, a separate room was provided in which family members could wash one another's feet.

The idea of permitting family members and couples to wash one another's feet was a dream I had had for several years. Being the father of two daughters and no sons, I never had the opportunity of sharing the commitment of service and sacrifice in the footwashing service with any other member of my family.

I presented the idea to the Deacon Board for consideration. When the board approved the idea, we worked together on the logistics.

Three rooms were prepared for the footwashing service, one for men, a second for women, and the third for families and couples. Each room had towels, basins, and a supply of

water. A privacy screen in the "family room" allowed women to remove stockings out of the view of others.

Families had been instructed to inform me prior to the Communion service if they planned to participate in the footwashing service as a family. This was done so that the head of the household could receive instructions regarding the proper procedure for family footwashing.

When the time came for washing feet during the Communion service, individuals and families went to one of the three rooms (for men, women, or families) a few at a time to wash one another's feet. Following the footwashing, the rest of the Communion service continued as normal, with the Love Feast and the Eucharist.

Was this attempt at family footwashing successful? Yes, several families chose to participate in the footwashing together, and all of them were greatly blessed by the experience. It also caused no offense to other members of the body, and caused little disruption in the flow of the service.

"It was the most meaningful Communion I have ever been a part of," Leonard Mosher said. This feeling was enthusiastically shared by other families that participated. In fact, the idea was so well-received that the church plans to have at least one "family Communion" annually.

Jimmy Saunders Begins Pastoral Service At Johnstown Third Brethren Church

Johnstown, Pa. — Rev. Jimmy C. Saunders is the new pastor of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church.

Rev. Saunders began serving the Johnstown Third congregation on January 1 of this year. He succeeds Rev. Jerald Radcliff, who retired in August of 1992.

Before coming to Johnstown, Rev. Saunders had pastored in both Methodist and Church of the Brethren congregations. He began his ministry in 1962, serving various Methodist churches in the Louisiana Conference.

In 1980 he joined a Church of the Brethren congregation in Bakersfield, Calif., and he began a full-time pastorate in 1985. His most recent position prior to coming to Johnstown Third Church was overseeing a mission in southeastern Kentucky.

Saunders attended Northeast State University and Louisiana State Univer-

Rev. Jimmy C. Saunders, new pastor of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church.



sity, and he earned a master of theology degree from St. Paul's School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo.

Rev. Saunders is married to the former Iva Lu Baker of Campbell, Mo. They are the parents of five grown children.

— reported by Floyd Benshoff

Ashland Theological Seminary Sponsoring Tour to Holy Land

Ashland, Ohio — Ashland Theological Seminary is sponsoring a tour June 11–26 to Switzerland, Egypt, and the Holy Land.

The itinerary, which includes visits to some of the most spectacular and historically significant locations in Egypt, Israel, and Switzerland, has been designed to provide an in-depth exposure to the history, culture, and archaeology of the ancient Middle East.

Tour leaders will be Dr. and Mrs. Fred Finks and Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Walther. Dr. Finks is vice president for the seminary, and Dr. Walther is professor of Greek and New Testament at ATS.

Tour participants will travel via Cleveland and Chicago to Switzerland, where visits will be made to Zurich and Lucerne with an afternoon cogwheel ride on Mt. Pilatus. Following two days in Switzerland, they will fly to Egypt (Cairo), where they will take a sightseeing trip to the pyramids and the Sphinx at ancient Giza, visit the great Egyptian Museum, shop in the old bazaar area of Cairo, and sail on the Nile.

Following three days in Egypt, the group will travel overland to Jerusalem to begin eight days in Israel. In addition to visits to various sites in Jerusalem and its environs (including the Temple Mount, Wailing Wall, Garden Tomb, Mt. of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane),

the group will also travel to Bethlehem, Qumran (where the Dead Sea scrolls were found), Massada, the Dead Sea, Galilee, Nazareth, Haifa, Caesarea, and other selected Old Testament and New Testament sites.

Cost of the trip is \$2,880, which includes round-trip airfare from Cleveland to the Middle East via Swissair, hotel accommodations for 14 nights at five-star hotels (double occupancy; \$350 more for single occupancy), daily breakfasts and dinners, Egyptian visa, and tips for guides, drivers, and servers at meals. An optional flight to Luxor and Karnak and the "Valley of the Kings" while in Egypt is \$300 extra.

The tour can be taken for four hours of graduate academic credit. Reading assignments and a trip log are required of those seeking this credit.

More information, including a tour brochure and a comprehensive trip itinerary, is available by contacting Mrs. Lennie Reich at the seminary (phone: 419-289-5165).

Dead or Alive?

One sign of a church that's alive is that it's growing so fast it's hard to remember everyone's name. Dead churches don't have that problem. Everybody has known everybody else for years and years. Alive churches also have lots of parking problems. Dead churches don't.

— adapted from *Building Program Briefs*

Eighteen Couples Renew Vows During Valentine's Day Service At New Lebanon Brethren Ch.

New Lebanon, Ohio — On St. Valentine's Day this year, when many couples were talking about love and giving small tokens of affection to one another, eighteen married couples from The Brethren Church in New Lebanon went a big step farther and took part in a special service in which they reaffirmed their marriage vows to one another.

Rev. Ray Hesketh, associate pastor of the church, led the service. He began the service with 30 minutes of teaching on God's plan for husbands and wives and on the nature of true love, based on three passages from the Bible: Ephesians 5:21-33, 1 Peter 3:1-7, and 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. The teaching from these verses, which are often used at weddings, served as a bridge to the ceremony of reaffirmation that followed.

The words of reaffirmation were spoken with nervousness and tears by some, but with excitement by all. One husband made the night more memorable for his wife by replacing her wedding ring with a new one.

For a number of the participating couples, this was the first time they had spoken these vows in their church. They had been married before a magistrate, not a pastor or in a church. This made the event particularly special for them.

Next, all the couples were honored with a photograph and a certificate to commemorate the evening. Each couple was called forward in turn according to the number of years they had been married. The briefest marriage was less than one year, the longest 65. In fact, two couples had been married more than 50 years, and each received a round of applause in recognition of this accomplishment and in appreciation of their example to others.

The service was witnessed by a number of friends and family members who shared in the joy, making the event even more like a wedding. The evening concluded with a cake and punch reception in the decorated church Fellowship Hall.

"In this era that sees such a large number of divorces," commented Rev. Hesketh, "this act [of reaffirming vows] has particular importance. It shows that there are still people who view marriage as God intended, a permanent bond between a man and woman. By choosing to reaffirm their vows, these couples have publicly proclaimed their desire to make their marriages the best they can be through God's help."

— reported by Rev. Ray Hesketh



Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



A Lesson From Pets

Do you have a pet — a cat or dog, or perhaps a guinea pig or gerbil? Or maybe you have a bird or fish or even some unusual pet. Whatever kind of pet you have, it is very important to you. You care about it, and you would be very sorry if something happened to it. If it got lost, you would look everywhere for it. You would search in and around your house and all through your neighborhood until you found your lost pet. And if you couldn't find it, you would be very sad.

Jesus told a story about a man who had an experience much like this. The man was a shepherd and his "pet" was a sheep. Actually, the man had 100 sheep. But each one of the 100 was like a pet to him. Each sheep had a name, and the shepherd loved every one of them.



One day one of the sheep (perhaps it was one of the lambs) wandered off and got lost. When the shepherd realized that it was gone, he became very worried and upset. After making sure that the rest of the sheep were safe in a pen, he went off in search of the missing one. He searched on the hillsides and in the valleys, along the creeks and in the thorn bushes. Finally he found the missing sheep. He picked it up, put it on his shoulders, and carried it back to the other sheep. What a caring, loving shepherd he was!

Isn't that a wonderful story? But Jesus made it clear that this wasn't just a story. It was a parable, a story with a meaning. Jesus' story was really about Himself (He's the shepherd) and the way He loves people (the sheep). Jesus loves people so much that He wants each of us to be His "pet."

But we often are like the lost sheep. We want to do our own thing. We don't want to go to church or be with other Christians or do what the Bible teaches. Instead, we'd rather play and be with friends and do what everybody else is doing.

Even so, Jesus doesn't forget about us. He loves us so much that He keeps looking for us. He keeps calling us to Himself. And if we let Him, He will pick us up in His arms of love and make us one of His special "pets."

So let your pet be a reminder of the special love Jesus has for you. He loves you much more than you could ever love your pet. And He wants you to be His very own.

Activities

1. The Parable of the Lost Sheep is found in Luke chapter 15. Two other "things" are lost and found in this chapter. What are they? _____
2. Use the following code to solve the coded message below: a = ⚙, d = *, e = ✱, f = ♦, g = ♥, h = ✱, i = ✱, l = ●, m = ○, n = ■, o = □, p = □, r = ❖, s = ▲, t = ▼, w = ▸, y = I. Who said this message? _____

✱ ⚙ ○ ▼ ✱ ✱ ♥ □ □ ✱ ▲ ✱ ✱ □ ✱ ✱ ❖ ✱ . ▼ ✱ ✱ ♥ □ □ ✱ ▲ ✱ ✱ □ ✱ ✱ ❖ ✱
 ● ⚙ I ▲ ✱ □ ▸ ■ ✱ ✱ ▲ ● ✱ ♦ ✱ ♦ □ ❖ ▼ ✱ ✱ ▲ ✱ ✱ ✱ □ .

John 10:11

From
The



Grape
Vine

David and Penny Knouff and Wayne and Waneta Holland were ordained deacons and deaconesses January 31 in the Louisville, Ohio, Brethren Bible Church. Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, presented a message on "The Leadership God Expects" during the special service. Rev. Cooksey was assisted in the ordination of the Knouffs and Hollands by Rev. Jim Ray, pastor of the Brethren Bible Church, and by Pastor Ray's wife, Rev. Jennifer Ray. An informal reception with cake and other refreshments followed the service.

The Burlington, Ind, First Brethren Church on January 17 dedicated a newly acquired property just east of the church building. On the property is a one-story frame house, which the church plans to rent out, preferably to a church family. In the future the church may use the house as a temporary home for struggling families that are trying to get on their feet. The property also provides space for future expansion of the church building. Purchase price of the house and property was \$27,500.

Bryan, Ohio, home of the Bryan First Brethren Church, is a great place to live, according to author and researcher Norman Crampton. Bryan is ranked 52nd in Crampton's new book, *The 100 Best Small Towns in America*, which ranks towns with populations between 5,000 and 15,000, which are not suburbs of larger cities. Some of the criteria used by Crampton in making his

selections include per capita income; proportion of population in the 25 to 34 age group; number of physicians; percentage of population with four or more years of college education; local government spending

for public education; economic base; proximity to a metropolitan area; and scenic beauty. According to Crampton, small towns are an endangered species, with more of them dwindling than thriving.

Georgie Arehart Honored For 42 Years as S.S. Teacher

Pineville, Va. — Georgie Arehart was honored December 6 by the Mt. Olive Brethren Church at a surprise retirement celebration.

Mrs. Arehart served as teacher of the first and second grade Sunday school class at Mt. Olive for the past 42 years. Many of her former students were on hand to express their appreciation for her faithfulness and friendliness as their teacher.

The celebration took place during the coffee and doughnut time that is held on the first Sunday of each month. Those who had gathered in the room sprang the surprise when Mrs. Arehart walked in.

In addition to the expressions of appreciation, Mrs. Arehart was honored with a corsage and with a plaque, presented to her by Sunday school superintendent Kris Morris, expressing the church's deep gratitude for her years of service. A

cake had also been prepared for all to enjoy.

Mrs. Arehart was caught completely off guard by the surprise celebration, but

she graciously expressed her appreciation to the Board of Christian Education, which planned the party, and to the church.

Approximately 100 people were present to applaud Mrs. Arehart for a job well done. One of these wisely remarked that they shouldn't forget her husband, Jake, who had driven her to Sunday school each week for the past 42 years.

— reported by Pastor Fred Miller



Georgie Arehart

In Memory

Norman E. McPherson, 82, February 18. Member since 1957 of the Gretna Brethren Church. Mr. McPherson was the father of ten living children, nine of whom are active in The Brethren Church. One son is a deacon and one daughter a deaconess in the Gretna Brethren Church, and three daughters are married to Brethren elders — Mrs. Brad (Karen) Weidenhamer, Mrs. John (Jean) Shultz, and Mrs. Dale (Marcia) Stoffer. Services by Pastor Lynn Mercer and Dr. John Shultz, son-in-law of the deceased.

Dyoll Hildebrand, 87, February 16. Longtime member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer.

Kayta Dierks, 44, February 11. Member for 32 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children and helped with the children's choirs. A first grade teacher, Mrs. Dierks was listed in *Who's Who in American Education* in 1992. Services by Rev. Marlin L. McCann.

Joseph Peavyhouse, 63, February 11. Longtime member of the Fremont First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Walk.

Veleta Bibler, 86, February 5. Longtime member of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell W. Funkhouser.

Leona Shimp, 73, February 4. Longtime member of The Brethren Church at New Lebanon, where she was active in the visitation ministry and, for more than ten years, led a weekly Bible study at a local nursing home. Services by Pastor James Black.

Esther Burkett, 68, January 29. Longtime member of the Fremont First Brethren Church.

Edith Barnheiser, 78, January 15. Attended the Fremont Brethren Church.

James "Alfred" Pittman, 79, January 14. Member for 54 years of the Mount Olive Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Fred Miller.

Mona I. Pendleton, 74, January 5. Longtime member of the Fremont Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Walk.

Helen J. Keiser, 78, December 3. Longtime friend of the Fremont Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

John and Harriet Ladd, 50th, January 22. Members of the Warsaw First Brethren Church.

Gordon and Conjetta Harinan, 60th, January 1. Members of the Mount Olive Brethren Church.

Wedding

Penny Green to Patrick Reynolds, February 13, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Rev. David Cooksey officiating. Bride a member of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Lanark: 2 by transfer

Fremont: 2 by transfer

Wabash: 4 by affirmation of faith

Mount Olive: 4 by baptism, 3 by transfer

Pleasant View: 6 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Correction:

The people were wrongly identified in a photograph that accompanied an *Update* article, "Brethren Bible Church Meeting Needs By Operating Food Pantry in Louisville," reported by Shirley Brown, which appeared in the February issue of the *EVANGELIST* (p. 17). The mistake occurred because the picture was inserted backwards when printed. Thus for example, Pastor Jim Ray was to the far left of the printed photo instead of at the far right, as indicated. Our apologies to those in the photograph and to Mrs. Brown.

— The Editor

News-Notes From Around the World

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS VIOLATORS

Pakistan, China, and Sudan are among several countries singled out for their serious violations of religious rights in the newly released U.S. State Department Human Rights Report for 1992.

Pakistan was identified for several incidents of prosecuting Christians and Ahmadi Muslims for allegedly "blaspheming the Prophet Mohammed." Religious legislation aimed at the instituting of *Sharia* (Islamic law) in Pakistan has "encouraged an atmosphere of religious intolerance which has led to acts of violence directed at Ahmadis (a Muslim sect) and Christians," the report stated.

Concerning China, the report touched on the increasing use of torture against those the regime considers opponents. In many parts of China, the report stated, efforts are continuing to "reign in activities of the unapproved Catholic and Protestant movements, including raiding and closing a number of unregistered churches."

The report added that recent government repression "has reflected official concern over the government's inability to control the rapid growth of membership in the Christian groups."

In its report on Sudan, the State Department said the Islamic fundamentalist government is "continuing efforts, driven by religious extremism, to impose total authority over Sudanese institutions and society. Proselytizing by Muslims is allowed, but proselytizing of Muslims is not allowed."

On the other hand, the report did not mention confirmed accounts that Muslim authorities have made conversion to Islam a condition for receiving food aid

at camps set up for refugees and displaced people.

Also covered in the report were attacks on evangelical Protestants violently expelled from Catholic-dominated villages in Chiapas, southern Mexico, as well as a law in Saudi Arabia that prohibits public or private non-Muslim religious activities, which was enforced in 1992. It identified the case of a Saudi citizen who was publicly beheaded for the "crime" of importing a Bible and other religious material in September.

Randy Tift

PAKISTAN

Christian prisoner Chand Barkat was "acquitted with honor" January 24, after being charged with blaspheming the prophet Mohammed. He spent 15 months in detention without bail, and would have been executed had he been convicted.

The court concluded that the plaintiff, a business rival, had failed to produce other witnesses to the alleged crime and that his motivations were not strictly religious.

Another Christian, Gul Masih, is in prison, however, on similar charges. Masih was convicted last November of insulting Islam and the prophet Mohammed and was sentenced to death by hanging. His case is now on appeal.

Barbara Baker

CENTRAL ASIA

A cache of Christians of Korean descent living in Central Asia has come to light to the rest of the Christian world. They are descendants of thousands of Koreans who fled what is now North Korea around 1910 and again in the 1930s to escape Japanese conquerors.

Many of these Koreans ended up in the far eastern regions of the former Soviet Union. In the late 1930s and early 1940s Stalin turned the area into a weapons manufacturing center. Believing that the Koreans there were too high a security risk, he relocated them, in the dead of winter, throughout the country. As many as half died on the trains, but those who survived ended up in Central Asia.

Among the original Koreans who fled their homeland was a handful of Christians. Although many lost their faith in the ensuing years of communism and atheism, a small group clung to their beliefs, and today the seeds of their perseverance are responsible for the growth of the church in Korean com-

munities in the republics of Central Asia that are now part of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Exact numbers of Korean Christians in Central Asia are difficult to ascertain, but there are substantial groups in the cities of Tashkent and Alma Ata (capital of Kazakhstan republic). In fact, there are Korean Christians in all five Central Asian republics, even though these republics are predominantly Muslim. Koreans have been allowed to open churches because they are seen as having come from a Christian background and thus entitled to pursue their roots.

Elizabeth Farrell

ARGENTINA

The lower house of the Argentine Congress is set to debate a controversial draft law which, if ratified, would broaden religious rights in this traditionally Roman Catholic nation. But Protestants are skeptical that it will have any significant effect on present realities.

The law, which seeks to reform government regulation of non-Catholic religious entities imposed during previous *de facto* regimes, affirms that "every person enjoys the fundamental right to freedom of conscience and religion guaranteed in the National Constitution" and states that "religious beliefs will never constitute a motive for inequality or discrimination before the law."

Nevertheless, members of Argentina's Protestant community seriously doubt the proposed law will serve to extend the religious rights of evangelical Christians, and may even restrict present liberties. The skepticism is due in part to present law which requires non-Catholic churches to formally register with the government in order to have access to the law's provisions.

David Miller

BULGARIA

Bulgaria has announced it will disband its religious watchdog agency, the Directorate of Religious Faiths. Last year the agency attempted to mediate a dispute within the Orthodox church, but instead may have contributed to its eventual split.

Bulgaria is the first of the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe to do away with a religious oversight department.

Randy Tift

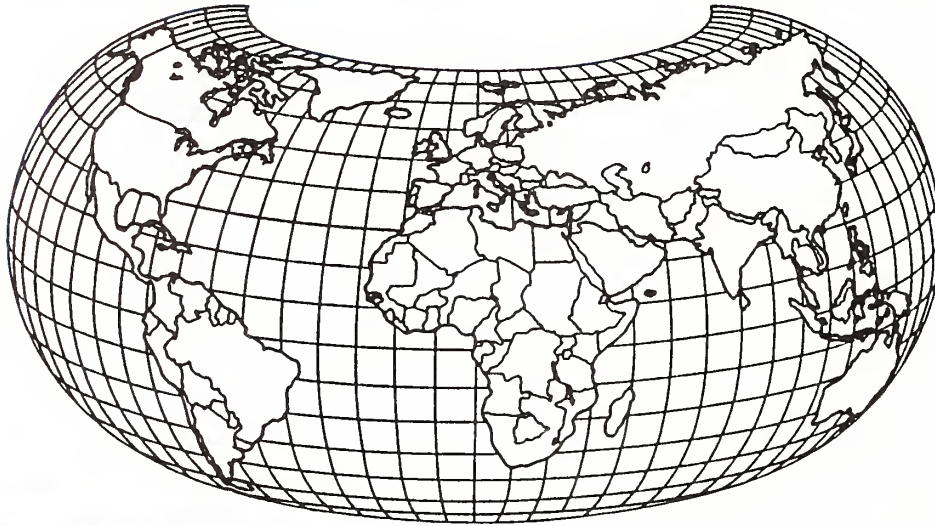
Source for these stories: *News Network International*.

MEXICO

In last month's "News-Notes" we reported that Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari had circumvented Mexico's official stance on non-Catholics and joined more than 600 evangelical Christian leaders for their annual prayer breakfast. After reading this item, Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda, Director of Latin American Ministries for The Brethren Church, wrote to report that our Mexico Brethren Church was represented at that gathering. Pastor José Castro, president of our Brethren Convention in Mexico, attended the prayer breakfast.

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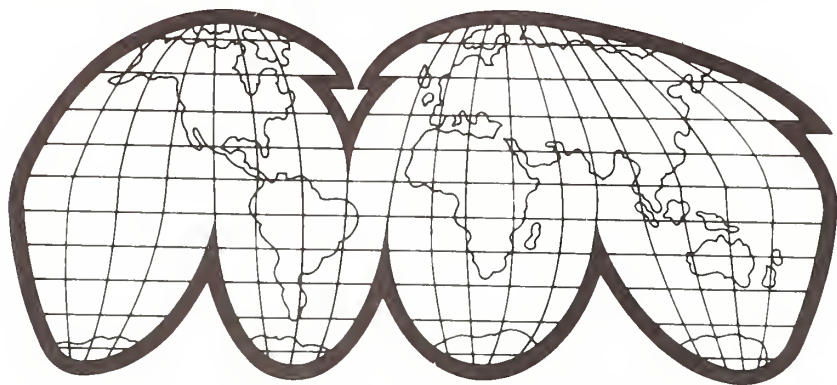
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APRIL 1993



Developing a Global Vision



Loving God With Our Minds

by
**John
Maust**

AFTER our Christian writers workshop near Mexico City, the 20 or so participants loaded into five vehicles for the ride back to town. It soon became evident, however, that several young adults in the van driven by missionary journalist Liz Isáis weren't ready for the workshop to end.

When Liz asked her passengers what they would like to discuss or sing during the two-hour drive home, they said, "Sister, we just want to listen to you talk." They wanted to "soak up" every last bit of wisdom they could.

The request amazed even Liz, who's seen it all during nearly 40 years of service in Latin America. What teacher wouldn't be thrilled by students with such teachable spirits and with such sincere hunger for knowledge and Christian growth?

Furthermore, these Mexican friends weren't like the person at one of my writers seminars who, when asked what she did for a living, said, "Oh, I attend workshops." Instead, these three Mexicans intended to *apply* their newly acquired knowledge in their respective ministries.

César, for instance, had just returned from a four-month missionary stint in an impoverished mountain region of Mexico, where his diet consisted of coffee and beans.

A desire to learn

I'm continually amazed by the intense desire of many Christians

in the developing world to equip themselves for Christian service. This is illustrated by the explosion of Bible institutes and seminaries across Latin America, Africa, and other regions of rapid church growth.

A missionary at ESEPA Seminary in Costa Rica recently told me, "Professors say it is exciting to teach here. The students are so hungry to learn."

"I don't know how long this hunger is going to last, but while it lasts, it's great."

And the learning boom isn't limited to students in religious institutions either. Carlos, a Colombian friend, was flunking out of high school when he accepted Christ as Savior. Almost overnight, Carlos recalls, he applied himself and excelled in high school. Later, mostly by reading all the available literature, he taught himself to become a skilled graphic artist and photographer.

The mind of Christ

What explains this zeal for learning and effective Christian service? The Apostle Paul cast some light on the subject when he told the Corinthians, "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16).

What an amazing thought — we Christians have the mind of Christ! So what are the implications? Do we clutter our minds with Phil Donahue and the Simpsons? Or do we absorb more things that make our minds Christlike?

Paul told the church in Rome, "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2, *NIV*). (I suppose the Romans had just as many distractions as we North Americans have.)

One of my college roommates, Russ, accepted Christ as Savior while we were rooming together. Almost every night a light in our room burned into the wee hours of the morning, as Russ read — not physics or biology — but the Scriptures. He wanted to know everything possible about the Bible, and he wanted to learn it as soon as possible.

It seems that many Christians in the developing world — like Russ — are still living their "first love" (cf. Rev. 2:4) and are taking seriously this injunction to renew their minds.

Getting recharged

During four years as a missionary in Peru, I taught writing and editing for Christian publications. I distinctly remember feeling, "Boy, I don't have much more to give." My hungry students had quickly devoured my limited supply of knowledge, and now they wanted more. I would need some additional studying myself in order to meet the students' needs.

This is why so many missionaries take yearlong study leaves or sabbaticals. They need to take more in before they can give more out.

The late missionary statesman Kenneth Strachan once wrote, "I like the thought of being a professional missionary, a man [or woman] . . . who loves his job, likes to study for it, likes to give himself to it, considers it the most important job in the world, thinks that no training is too high for it, likes to give extra hours to extra study on behalf of the job, believes that God has called him especially to that job. I think it's a wonderful thing to be a professional missionary."

Maybe no one will ever tell us, "I just want to listen to you talk." But we can try hard to be good learners — with the goal of being better servants for our Lord. [†]

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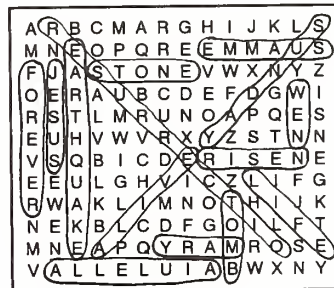
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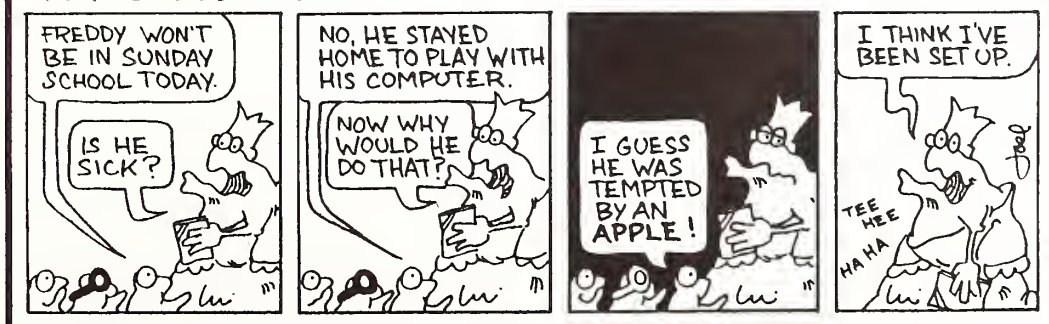
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Pontius' Puddle





GOD'S NEW SONG

By Jean Lersch

IN REVELATION 21:5 God has given a breath-taking announcement: *See, I am making all things new.*

God has designed a new order. Jesus lived and died to make this new order possible, then rose again so that we can know it is true. God is making all things new. Out with the old. It is buried and dead. In with the new. Jesus' resurrection assures us, as does His promise to come again.

The Psalmist gave us a preview of this newness when he said, "O sing to the LORD a new song . . . all the earth" (Psalm 96:1*) Every song has themes. Let's consider three themes in the new song God has composed and validated by Jesus' resurrection.

"Hallelujah!"

1. *Right makes might*

In 2 Kings 6:8-22 there is a wonderful story that helps us understand this theme in God's new song. The king of Aram was at war with Israel. But he had a problem. The king of Israel always knew ahead of time what the Aramean army was going to do. At first the king of Aram thought that his rooms were "bugged." But then he

*Quotations from the Bible are from the *New Revised Standard Version*.

Mrs. Lersch is a member of the St. Petersburg, Fla., Brethren Church, where she serves as a team member with Brethren House Ministries, a mission in Christian education.

learned that the prophet Elisha was the one providing this information. So Elisha was put on the king's "hit list."

At night Aramean horses and chariots and a great army surrounded Dothan, where Elisha was living. In the morning, Elisha's attendant was very disturbed to see the enemy army surrounding the town. But Elisha trusted God. He prayed and helped the attendant see God's ring of protecting horses and chariots of fire around them.

When the Arameans attacked, there was no bloodshed. Elisha prayed to the Lord, who struck them blind. Then Elisha led the army into Samaria. When they were inside the city, Elisha prayed again, and the eyesight of the men was restored.

The king of Samaria, having the mindset of the old way of looking at things, asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?"

Elisha replied in the spirit of God's new song:

"No! . . . Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink; and let them go to their master." 2 Kings 6:22

(What a suggestion to give a king who relied on military might for protection!)

The outcome of the story —

And the Arameans no longer came raiding into the land of Israel. 2 Kings 6:23

"Hallelujah!"

Another incident in the Old Testament underscores this theme that in God's new song **right makes might**. Saul wanted to kill David and, with his army, was searching for him.

First Samuel 24 records this episode. Saul went into a cave to care for personal needs. He didn't know that David and his men were hiding in that cave. When Saul was in a very vulnerable position, David sneaked up and cut off a piece of Saul's robe without Saul's knowing it. But he didn't kill Saul, even though David's men thought that he should.

Later, as Saul left the cave, David showed him, by holding up the corner of the robe he had cut off, that he had been close enough to kill him. Then Saul confessed:

"You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. . . . Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand."

1 Samuel 24:17, 20

This reminds me of the exhortation given at the end of the 12th chapter of Romans —

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Paul was underscoring the theme "**right makes might**" in God's new song.

"Hallelujah!"

Paul gives a reprise of the theme as he reflects on Jesus' mindset in Philippians 2:5-8. By emptying himself, by becoming a servant, by dying, Jesus' name has been exalted,

and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord . . .

Philippians 2:11

Ghandi understood and practiced the wisdom of this theme. So did Martin Luther King, Jr.

"For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST

2. God loves and accepts all people

The old song dictated that everyone belonged in a particular place. Jewish priests were honored. They had access to the inner courts of the temple. Gentiles and women had to stay in the outer courts. Lepers, children, and menstruating women were to stay out of sight and out of touch. There was a definite class structure.

The prophet Joel predicted a change in this structure when he said:

Then afterward

I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.
Even on the male and female slaves,
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

Joel 2:28, 29

All People would be included in the new order.

"Hallelujah!"

Jesus upset the accepted class structure. He touched and healed both lepers (Mark 1:40, 41) and the bleeding woman (Luke 8:43-48). He encouraged Mary to sit at His feet and to learn from what He, the rabbi, was teaching (Luke 10:38-41). He even took women with Him and the disciples in His travels. And He let the women pay the bills, for heaven's sake (Luke 8:1-3). He ordered his disciples, "Let the children come . . ." (Luke 18:15-17).

"Hallelujah!"

The old song seemed to have so many picky rules that brought unnecessary inconvenience. This was the way it was done, in a particular way:

- wash your hands in a certain complicated fashion;
- don't pick grain on the sabbath;
- don't do any work, including helping people, on the sabbath.

Jesus upset all of that. He lived out God's new song. He showed that it is more important to help people than to keep outmoded rules. He showed that life isn't always black-and-white, as the scribes and Pharisees saw it.

Manifesting compassion, fulfill-

ing God's law, He showed people what God's new song was all about. "You have heard that it was said . . . But I say to you . . .," Jesus said (Matthew 5-7).

"Hallelujah!"

Isn't that why the officials wanted to kill him? He was upsetting their homogeneous perspective. He was showing that people can't be homogenized. You shouldn't put people in certain slots. And He didn't follow rules that were detrimental to people.

Paul reflected this theme:

There is no longer Jew or Greek,
there is no longer slave or free,
there is no longer male and female;
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:28

"Hallelujah!"

The days of putting people in certain slots, of allowing only "higher class people" to participate because of their race, nationality, or sexuality are over. God's new song says so. "Whosoever will may come."

"King of kings"

3. God championed the underdog

A third theme of God's new song was the esteem given people usually considered of less value. Think about the *younger* sons and women in the biblical story who were heroes — Joseph, Esther, Ruth, Huldah, Deborah, David, the Prodigal Son. The example of David is especially significant.

In 1 Samuel 16, we read how the Lord sent Samuel to Jesse to anoint one of his sons as the new king. Jesse brought out his seven eldest sons, but Samuel knew none of them was God's choice. He finally asked, "Are all your sons here?"

Jesse's reply underscores the prevailing attitude of the day: "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." Nobody of that day would think that the youngest son who kept sheep would be eligible for such an important job as king.

"Hallelujah!"

Another example in David's life shows how God values the underdog. When he was fleeing from King

Saul, he gathered an army. Look at the description of this army:

Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. 1 Samuel 22:2

They sound like the dregs of society, but David became their captain.

"Hallelujah!"

Think about examples of people society considered inferior who were honored by God:

- Rehab the harlot is affirmed twice in the Old Testament and three times in the New.
- Poor shepherds received the first announcement of Jesus' birth.
- Women were the first to learn that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Didn't Jesus also live out this theme of God's new song —

- when He ate with publicans and sinners?
- when He praised the woman who washed His feet and dried them with her hair?
- when He called fishermen and a tax collector to be His disciples?
- when He pointed out the widow who gave her mite?
- when He made a Samaritan the hero of a story?
- when He used a woman searching for a lost coin as an example of God seeking the lost?
- when Lazarus the beggar got to heaven and the rich man didn't?

The old is over.

Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the morning. . . .
You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and clothed me with joy

Psalms 30:5b and 11

"and Lord of lords"

We can joyfully sing the themes in God's new song:

*Right makes might.
God loves all people.
God champions the underdog.*

"and God shall reign forever and ever."

Jesus proclaimed God's new song with His life and teaching. His resurrection proved the new song's validity. Halleluia! Christ is risen! We have new life! [†]

New Churches, New Growth

Final article in a series of four on The Brethren Church's
"Priorities for the Nineties" — by Ronald W. Waters

Priority 4 — Forming New Churches (Church Planting): to extend the ministry of the church to groups of people who have had inadequate exposure to the Christian faith, through the formation of new churches among a variety of people groups, with styles and formats appropriate to those groups.

WHY should we start new churches? We don't have enough pastors for the churches we already have."

"Some churches that have been around a long time are now struggling to survive. Wouldn't it be better to put our money and effort into making them strong again?"

"Charity begins at home. We should put all our efforts into reaching the people in our own community."

These are some common arguments against starting new churches. So why has General Conference made this a priority for The Brethren Church?

Reasons for new churches

The **primary reason**, of course, is that large numbers of persons in this country do not know Jesus Christ as saving Lord. Jesus' command is to make disciples of all people groups (Matthew 28:19-20). Peter said that the Lord does not want "anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). As long as anyone is sep-

arated from salvation in Jesus Christ, the gospel compels us to use every method possible to reach them.

Second, church planting is modeled in the New Testament. Everywhere the Apostle Paul went, he formed new believers into churches — for mutual support, worship, discipleship, fellowship, and outreach (Acts 14:21-28, for example).

Third, studies have shown that starting new churches is the most effective method of evangelism. New churches provide new opportunities for persons who are not yet Christians to be exposed to the Christian faith. And they offer new openings for ministry by pastors and lay persons alike.

Fourth, contrary to popular belief, there are fewer churches per thousand persons in the United States today than there were at the turn of the century. Today we need more churches with more varieties of styles and formats of ministry to reach a broadly divergent population.

Fifth, it is easier to produce new life than it is to revive the dead or dying. Older churches in decline may be revived, but only if they develop an outreach mindset. Some declining congregations have found new life as they have been involved in starting new churches!

Sixth, adding new churches increases the base of support for reaching even more people for Christ in the United States and for an expanding world missions effort.

A variety of people groups

Jesus said to make disciples "of all nations" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"Nations" literally means "people groups." The Great Commission certainly encompasses worldwide missions. But the number of "people groups" in the United States also continues to grow.

Persons are best reached when they do not have to cross linguistic and cultural barriers. Traditional churches will reach a diminishing share of the population. Starting new churches permits a variety of approaches in styles of worship, discipleship, and ministry.

Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, is an example. Pastor Bill Hybels' goal is to speak the language of modern culture and reach "Unchurched Harry" — the baby-boomer who is full of spiritual questions but uninvolved in organized religion.

Saturday evening and Sunday morning services are geared to "seekers" — persons beginning to wonder what Jesus Christ has to offer. They include drama, high quality music, and a message that is relevant to daily life issues rather than preachy. Services designed for spiritual growth of believers are held on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The Northview Brethren Life church in Franklin/Springboro, Ohio, is based on this model.

Growing ethnic populations, particularly African-, Asian-, and Hispanic-Americans, offer opportunities for outreach that traditional churches may have difficulty fulfilling. And socio-economic differences pose new challenges for outreach.

Brethren Hispanic churches in Sarasota and Pasadena and

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

The denominational priorities discussed in this series of articles were adopted by the 1992 General Conference.

"Studies have shown that starting new churches is the most effective method of evangelism. New churches provide new opportunities for persons who are not yet Christians to be exposed to the Christian faith."

African-American churches in Cleveland and Washington, D.C., are examples of efforts to minister to persons at their point of openness, in a style that is comfortable and inviting.

New approaches to starting churches

There is no one way to begin a new congregation. C. Peter Wagner suggests "twelve good ways to plant a church."* Brethren have used some of these methods in the past.

Hiving off happens when one congregation begins another by encouraging a nucleus of persons to serve as the core for a new church. The University Church in Ashland, Ohio, and the Bradenton, Florida, congregations were formed by core groups from Park Street and Sarasota, respectively.

Accidental parenthood is similar to hiving off, but the nucleus leaves in the midst of conflict rather than as a church planting effort. Goshen and Jefferson, Indiana, and Maurertown and Waterbrook, Virginia, are two examples. While this may not be a preferred method of starting new churches, two thriving congregations may result, ministering to far more persons than the one previous church.

The **satellite model** was used in forming the 340 Brethren Church near Elkton, Virginia. While pastoring the Bethlehem Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Pastor Pat Velanzon formed a new church among friends who lived some distance from Harrisonburg and who felt uncomfortable in a traditional church. He started the new church in a picnic pavilion on U.S. 340 and continues to pastor both congregations.

Sarasota, Florida, First Brethren has also used the **multicongregational church** model in forming

the Iglesia Hispana church. Originally, the Hispanic congregation shared the same facilities while having its own pastor and organization.

The **founding pastor** has been the model most commonly used in recent Brethren history. The district and national mission boards commission and support a pastoral family to begin a new work in an assigned location. Financial support comes from the church at-large through missions giving. Often tentmakers, lay persons who intentionally move to the site of the new church, earn their livelihood apart from the church but minister within it. A variety of methods within this model have been used, including telemarketing ("The Phone's for You"), forming

cell groups, and initiating home Bible studies.

In the past, many churches were started by **independent church planters** — persons (often lay rather than pastoral) who started new churches without support of any local, district, or national organization. As Brethren migrated across the United States, they would begin a church in their new community. Sometimes they would call an evangelist for extended revival services or a nearby elder to help in organizing efforts.

Again, there is no one right way to begin a new church. The key is having a heart for the lost, eyes to see persons who have need for saving faith in Jesus Christ, and a mind to find the most effective way to reach them. [†]

Results of Brethren Church Planting

From 1946 through 1991 (the last year for which all statistics are complete), 53 Brethren churches/classes were started. Of these, 34 churches/classes were still in existence at the end of 1991. This represents a 58 percent success rate.

The impact on average Sunday worship attendance of these 34 new churches is striking, as shown by the table below. The increase in average worship attendance from 1946 to 1991 of churches that existed in 1946 was 17 percent. But the average worship attendance increase including those churches started since 1946 was 67 percent! Also, these 34 new churches accounted for 27 percent of all existing Brethren churches in 1991.

In 1991, the median worship attendance of churches started from 1946 to 1991 was 50 — somewhat less than the median of 62 for all Brethren churches. But in 1991 four of the

churches started between 1946 and 1991 were in the top ten of all Brethren churches in average worship attendance, namely: Brethren Fellowship of the Savior (1,000), Winding Waters (431), Jefferson (258), and Waterbrook (201).

Clearly, without the planting of new Brethren churches from 1946 to 1991, The Brethren Church as a whole would have shown a statistically insignificant growth in average worship attendance. New churches have been effective in reaching new people.

(Statistics were drawn from an unpublished report compiled in 1990 by Bill Walk using 1946/47 statistical reports; *The Brethren Church Annual Report 1991*; and "Planting Brethren Churches," an unpublished paper written by Bradley Weidenhamer in 1990, updated with information about new churches started since that time.)

Average Worship Attendance

	1946/47*	1991	
All churches that existed in 1946	6,759	7,908	+17%
All churches started from 1946 to 1991	0	3,384	
Total Average Worship Attendance	6,759	11,292	+67%

*Where statistics for 1946 were unavailable, 1947 figures were used.

*C. Peter Wagner, *Church Planting for a Greater Harvest* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1990), pp. 59-75.

A National Call to United Prayer

Issued by the National Consultation on United Prayer

ON JANUARY 20 the eyes of the world were focused on the inauguration of incoming President Bill Clinton in Washington, D.C. As political leaders gathered in the nation's capital, more than 300 Christian leaders from 36 states, representing 166 organizations, gathered in Colorado Springs, Colorado, to intercede for the nation and issue a call to prayer and repentance within the church, a call that many Christians believe will inaugurate a new era of spiritual leadership toward revival in America.

The historic gathering, dubbed the National Consultation on United Prayer (N-CUP), drew Christian leaders from across denominational lines. Beginning on Inauguration Day, the leaders spent two days in united prayer for spiritual renewal within the Body of Christ and for reconciliation and evangelism. Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, represented The Brethren Church at this historic consultation.

A unique gathering

David Bryant, president of Concerts of Prayer International and a key organizer of the N-CUP gathering, set the stage for the event in his opening remarks to the delegates. "This is a most unique and historic gathering," Bryant said. "Because what we're seeking, under God, to see happen in the next 24 hours is that God would inaugurate in this land a new level of leadership, united to call this nation

into prayer for revival, and to call us to prayer that will be sustained until God grants it.

"In this one thing we will be agreed, and to this one objective we will press, that we will, in covenant with one another, and with God, summon His people to this work of prayer for revival, because there is no other hope for the nation!"

Prayer for President Clinton

As one of the first orders of business, Dick Eastman, president of Every Home for Christ and chairman of America's National Prayer Committee, the body which organized the consultation, called the 300 delegates to a special ses-

sion of prayer for President Bill Clinton and his new administration. The delegates also signed a letter addressed to the President confirming their ongoing prayer support for President Clinton, Vice President Gore, and their families. More prayer followed for the new President in a three-and-one-half-hour prayer session on the second day, which focused prayer on the needs of the nation and its leaders.

Dr. Paul Cedar, president of the Evangelical Free Church of America and one of many denominational representatives present, explained the importance of the N-CUP call to prayer and revival in his address to the gathering on the second day of meetings. He believes revival must first begin with the church.

"Secular society in America today recognizes that we are in an incredible decline," Dr. Cedar noted. "The reason why the United States is in disgrace today is the problem of the church. The Church of Jesus Christ today is in trouble. The Church of Jesus Christ is in disgrace.

Prayer the key to revival

"The future of the nation depends much more upon this meeting than on what happened at the inauguration in Washington, D.C., yesterday. We need to pray for the restoration of the church so that it may lead to the restoration of the nation. Prayer is the key to revival. Prayer is the key to evangelism."

At the end of the consultation, a subcommittee drafted a call to prayer and a covenant (at left) that the delegates unanimously accepted and agreed to implement within their respective spheres of in-

The Call

We recognize our absolute dependence on God and our desperate need for divine intervention.

We believe God is urging us to call all Christians of America to unite in humility and repentance across ethnic and church boundaries to pray persistently for a moral and spiritual awakening in the Body of Christ.

We believe this will greatly advance His Kingdom in our nation and worldwide.

The Covenant

We covenant to obey this call by taking the following actions:

- We will promote this call as broadly as possible.
- Individually, we will commune with God and pray with faith daily.
- We will encourage and participate regularly in corporate, believing prayer.
- We will fast as God prompts us.
- Feeling incomplete without embracing God's family from all races, we will seek reconciliation and participation with all our brothers and sisters.
- We will pray until God sovereignly acts.

Endorsed by Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, on January 21, 1993; and by the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, and past Moderator of General Conference on January 26, 1993.

NOTE: The "National Call to United Prayer" may be reproduced and distributed without prior permission from the National Prayer Committee.

fluence. Many agreed to reprint the "National Call to United Prayer" in denominational and organizational newsletters and to distribute individual copies to other pastors and church leaders.

N-CUP delegates, along with believers from across the nation, were also urged to participate in the upcoming National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 6. Inter-

cessors are asked to pray individually for the nation and its leaders on May 6, and help organize prayer events through local churches that will bring Christians to their knees in prayer for the nation.

Intercessors for our nation

"In Ezekiel 22 the Lord says He looks in vain for someone to stand in the gap, and we are intercessors

for our nation," said Shirley Dobson, chair of the National Day of Prayer Task Force and wife of Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family. "So on May 6 we are going to be lifting up this nation before God. We're going to be repenting for its sins, the sins of immorality, the sins of idolatry — we're going to bring this nation before the Lord because that's our only hope." [†]

A Strange Marriage

By William Kerner



Rev. Kerner, retired Brethren pastor and former Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, is currently serving as interim pastor of the Tucson, Ariz., First Brethren Church. This article appeared in the Tucson Church newsletter and is reprinted here with Rev. Kerner's permission.

THE WEDDING was over. Joe and his bride were alone at last. As the car pulled away from the curb, the bride moved to the far end of the seat and said, "Joe, take me home!"

"Home!" Joe exclaimed. "But we haven't started our honeymoon yet."

"Joe," the bride said, "I'm glad we're married. We belong to each other, and I can use your name as mine. But please, I want to go back to my old apartment."

"Now that we're married, I'll try to see you once a week. But as far as living with you is concerned, nothing doing! I'm going back to my old occupation, to my old friends, and to my old way of life."

"Oh yes, I do love you! I've accepted you as my husband, haven't I? I belong to you forever. But I refuse to let you interfere with my life."

"Of course, if I'm sick or if I need money, I'll call you at once, because after all, I accepted you as my husband. But in the meantime, thank you for being loving to me. Thank you for being my husband. But just keep your hands off of my life."

What to do you think of these newlyweds? Marriage? Hardly! And yet there are those who call themselves Christians whose attitude toward Jesus is exactly the same as this bride's attitude toward her husband.

They say, in effect, if not in so many words: "Jesus, I have accepted you as my Savior. Thank you for saving me. Now leave me alone!"

"I'm going back to my old way of life. I'll expect you to help me if I need it, since you are my Savior. But as for living with you, nothing doing! Of course, when I die, I want to come and share the home you have prepared for me. But I hope that won't be for a long, long time!"

The Apostle Paul uses marriage as an illustration of the relationship between believers and Christ. He says that the Holy Spirit comes to you and points you to the Christ who died for your sins and who rose again. Then the Spirit asks, "Will you take Jesus to be your Savior and Lord for all eternity?"

Then the believer answers, "I will." From the moment you come up out of the waters of baptism, you are "married" to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead.

"So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God" (Romans 7:4, *NIV*). [†]

Homestead, Florida, Revisited

Six months after Hurricane Andrew

By Mark Ray

After Hurricane Andrew hit southern Florida last August, members of the Sarasota, Fla., First Brethren Church made three mission trips to Homestead to help with the clean up. In February, three members of those work teams — Linda and Jeff Yoder and Mark Ray — made a return trip to the area where they had served. Mr. Ray, Director of Ministries and Youth at the Sarasota Church, sent the following report.

MORE THAN SIX MONTHS have passed since Hurricane Andrew cut a swath of destruction across southern Florida and into Louisiana. For many of us, Andrew has become a faded memory of a tragic event gone by. But for residents of Homestead and Florida City, what we faintly remember is still a present reality. The shadow of Hurricane Andrew lingers with them daily.

Recovery has been extremely slow in southern Florida. According to some estimates, less than half of the homes and one-third of the businesses have been rebuilt. Many scenes have changed little since the end of the hurricane.

Many homes, abandoned by

tains" of rubble that lie beyond the Homestead city limits. It is still a city without trees, as it will be for years to come.

Much Good News

Despite all that has not yet been accomplished, there is much good news. Many people are back on their feet and living in homes that are nicer than before. Power and telephone lines are operational; mail service is regular; flowers are blooming; and even street signs have been put back into place.

Especially encouraging are the testimonies and reports we received from families we assisted. All of the families whom we helped have either completely recovered and rebuilt, or they have at least settled with their insurance companies and have plans to rebuild.

Upon our return visit to Homestead in February, we were enthusi-

their thankfulness to God for His protection and strength, and to us for our help and encouragement.

The Leon family, which lost everything (as reported in the October 1992 issue of the *EVANGELIST*), credited their tenacity and their decision to remain and rebuild in Homestead to our work teams and the encouragement we offered by our presence and our assistance.

They expressed a tremendous amount of gratitude to all the Brethren who prayed for them and helped them, whether directly or indirectly. Mr. Leon also expressed regret — regret that there is not a Brethren church in their area in which they could be involved. He



At left, the home of the Leon family shortly after the hurricane (following clean up). Above, the remodeled home in February.



their overwhelmed and uninsured owners, look the same as they did last September — no roofs, clothes in the closets, belongings in ruins inside. Many people are still trying to settle with their insurance companies.

Piles of trash still sit beside the roads, waiting to be picked up and hauled to one of the many "moun-

astically greeted by the friends we had made there in August and September. Each family was quick to offer us a tour of their "new" home. As we walked through those homes, we were amazed by the transformation that had taken place.

Their gratitude was especially moving. Tearfully, they expressed

said, "It is comforting to know that there are people like the Brethren who are living out their faith and helping others."

According to the Leons and others, life is gradually returning to "normal." The children go to school; the parents go to work; and they come home to a half-built house and a travel trailer. Each day moves them one step closer to total recovery, but the process will continue to be slow.

Because Hurricane Andrew is still very much a reality for the people of Homestead, our prayers and encouragement are still needed. And on behalf of our friends in Homestead, we extend their thanks and appreciation for your past prayers and gifts. [†]

The Church's Ministry: Providing Hope for a Changing World

By Dr. Arthur Evans Gay, Jr., Executive Director
World Relief Corporation of the National Association of Evangelicals

THE BRETHREN CHURCH is one of World Relief's key partners, helping World Relief provide "food for the body and food for the soul" in front-line ministry regions of the world. This partnership is especially important in a rapidly-changing world.

While changing political realities have led to war and persecution in Yugoslavia and Somalia, poverty and hunger are the result of economic and environmental changes in many other nations. Your support of World Relief's ministry this month helps provide hope in the midst of change to thousands of people around the world.

India — "Everyone in the Brethren Mission in India is happy and thankful to World Relief for helping us to help the suffering and poor in India," writes Rev. K. Prasanth Kumar, National Director of the Brethren Mission in India. World Relief supports Brethren Mission ministries including nutrition and health projects and income-generation activities such as sewing and typewriting training.

Yugoslavia — Through partner agency Front Line Outreach, World Relief helped provide more than \$250,000 worth of donated goods, including medical supplies, heaters, clothes, and toys in the Bosnian city of Mostar. "We conducted evangelistic services every night," reported Kevin Turner of Front Line Outreach. "The place was packed out with Muslims, Serbs and Croats every single night. And we shared from our hearts." In addition to ministries in Bosnia-Herzegovina, local churches and World Relief are meeting physical and spiritual needs of the war-torn population in the republics of Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Somalia — "It's very sad. In many villages, you have all women; all the men have been wiped out," reports David Loudon, Director of Operations for Africa, after a recent trip to Somalia. In the midst of massive hunger, however, "Somalis are seeing the love and example of Christians," Loudon adds. To combat diseases which have ravaged Somalia, World Relief provided much-needed medical supplies through partner agency World Concern. World Relief also helped church partners in Kenya dig wells for Somali refugees who fled their violent homeland.

Mozambique — "Because of the hard times, people are turning to God. We had war; now, thank God, it is over," said Rev. Inacio Joaquim de Matos, a pastor in Chokwe. In one of the largest relief efforts in World Relief history, World Relief delivered food as well as seeds and tools to thousands of famine victims. Teams have drilled 22 wells for drought-prone villages. In addition, a recent peace treaty has brought new hope to one of the world's poorest and most violent nations.

Peru — World Relief is working on two fronts in this needy nation: assisting partner agency the Luke Society in its crucial ministry of child health programs; and supporting the front-line ministries of indigenous



Dr. Arthur Gay and a woman in Mozambique examine relief materials.

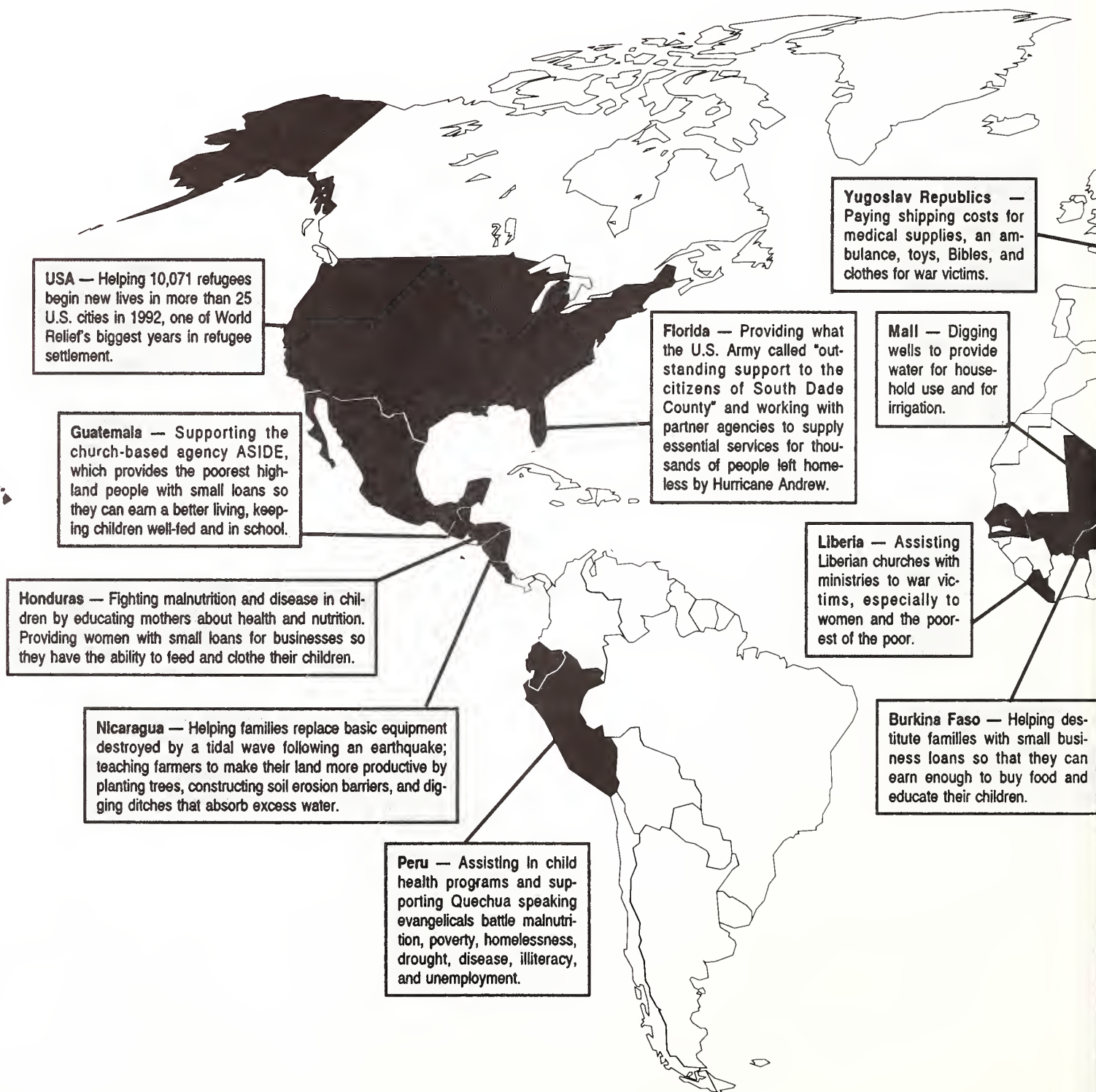
Quechua-speaking evangelicals as they battle malnutrition, poverty, homelessness, drought, disease, illiteracy, and unemployment.

USA — "My children and I are some of the fortunate few," said Abdulli Ibrahim Hassan after coming to North Carolina from his homeland, Somalia. Hassan and his family are some of the 150 Somali refugees — victims of violence and persecution — that World Relief and local churches helped begin new lives in the U.S. in the past year. In 1993, World Relief will link 250 to 350 Somali refugees with churches who are part of World Relief's Good Samaritan Network.

THESE are just some of the ministries The Brethren Church has helped support this past year. As God leads us together, World Relief will continue to minister to those who are suffering in 1993. We have a great task ahead of us. With the help of the people of The Brethren Church, we can go and provide "food for the body and food for the soul." [†]

WORLD RELIEF AT WO

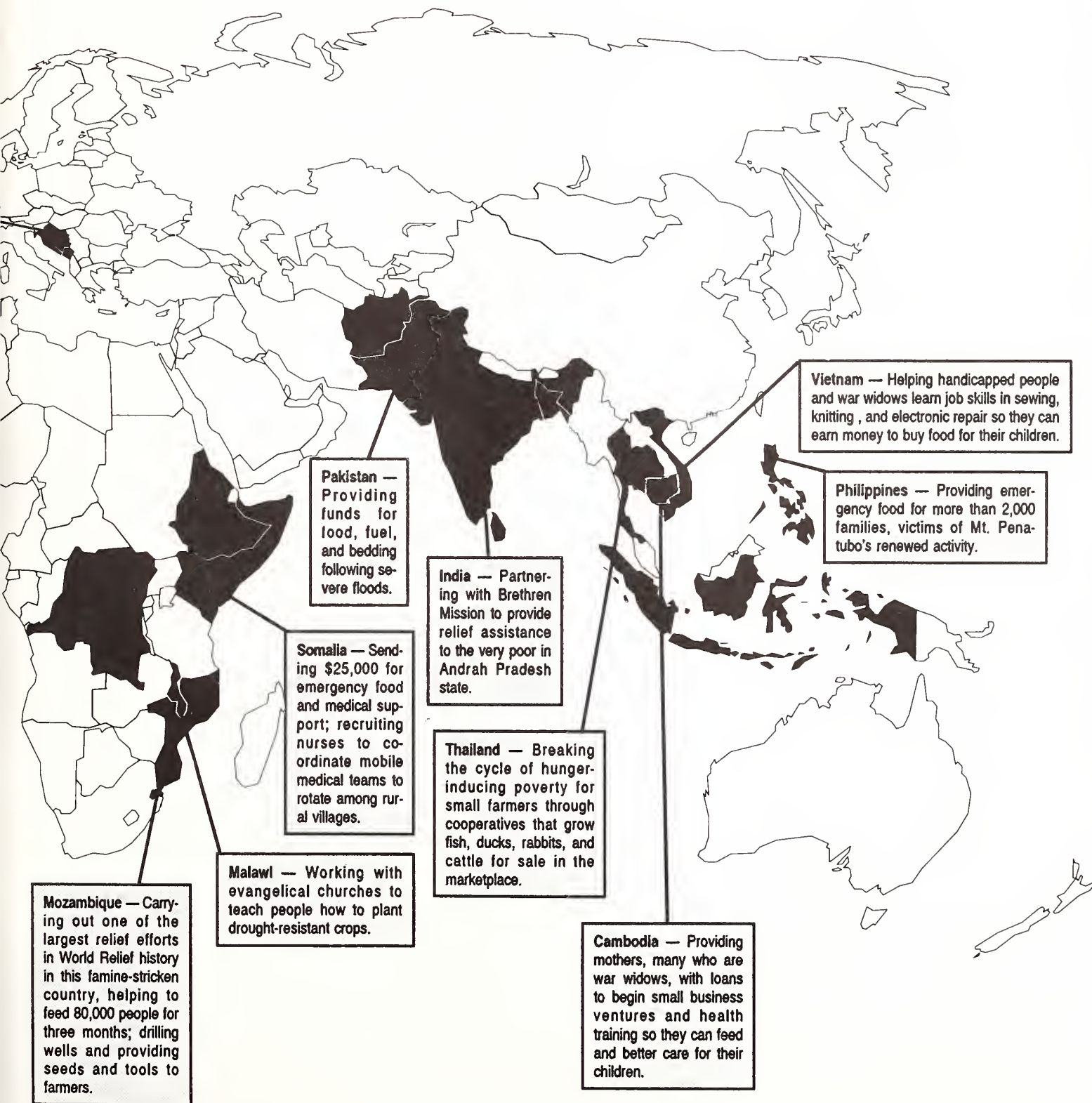
In countries both near at hand and far away, World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals is working to alleviate human suffering in the name of Christ. Working through local churches and church-related agencies, World Relief helps meet the crisis needs of those affected by disasters. But it goes beyond that to provide long-term develop-



K AROUND THE WORLD

World Relief

ment assistance to people so that they can help themselves. World Relief is also committed to caring for the spiritual needs of those to whom it ministers, so it fosters spiritual as well as material development. Below is a sample of what World Relief has done and continues to do. By our gifts for World Relief, we are partners in these projects.



World Relief Giving in 1992

How Much Was Received?

A total of \$88,477 was received for Brethren World Relief in 1992 from Brethren churches and individuals. This was \$2,363 more than was received in 1991, representing a 2.7 percent increase.

Until August, giving for World Relief lagged behind the 1991 pace, but an outpouring of donations in response to Hurricane Andrew pushed the year-end total beyond that of 1991. In all, \$16,900 for Hurricane Andrew relief work was received.

Sixty-two congregations, or just over half, gave at least 100 percent of their full General Conference approved World Relief Fair Share support (based on \$6.00 per Church Growth Index* point). Of these, 27 gave at least double

*Church Growth Index = (membership + average SS attendance + average worship attendance) divided by 3.

their full Fair Share. As a result, total denominational giving for World Relief was 138 percent of the designated Fair Share, despite the fact that 29 congregations gave nothing.

To the right is a list of the ten churches that gave the most to World Relief in 1992. As you might expect, some of these are among our larger churches; but some are not. *(To give you an idea of its size, the Church Growth Index* of each church is given in parentheses after its name.)*

But because size is a factor in total giving, a list of the top 14 churches according to the percentage of their Fair Share they gave is also shown. Note the three churches in both lists! *(All churches giving 300% or more are listed.)*

How Was It Distributed?

The majority of the money received went to World Relief of

Top Ten Churches in Total Giving to World Relief†

1. Winding Waters (326)	\$5,464
2. St. James (282)	4,317
3. Jefferson (226)	3,499
4. South Bend (102)	3,331
5. Smoky Row (75)	3,109
6. Park Street (372)	3,102
7. Vinco (146)	2,986
8. New Lebanon (252)	2,643
9. Brighton Chapel (139)	2,203
10. Mt. Olive (148)	2,150

Top Churches in Percentage Giving to World Relief†

1. Center Chapel (36)	1,068%
2. St. Petersburg (11)	858%
3. Smoky Row (75)	773%
4. Mt. Olivet (22)	614%
5. Teegarden (23)	560%
6. South Bend (102)	539%
7. Valley (74)	529%
8. Raystown (23)	395%
9. Bethlehem (58)	332%
10. Williamstown (29)	330%
11. Northgate (58)	328%
12. Stockton (49)	327%
13. Vinco (146)	325%
14. White Dale (15)	321%

Hurricane Andrew Recovery

World Relief of NAE has worked with other agencies in the rebuilding of Dade County, Florida, through ICARE (Interfaith Coalition for the Andrew Recovery Effort). This is a coalition of groups in which each agency works in its area of expertise in order to facilitate relief efforts.

By four months after the disaster, ICARE had coordinated the rebuilding of 1,800 homes for people without insurance. Another 1,000 homes are scheduled to be completed by August, with 600 more to be rebuilt in the second year.

World Relief's strategic role in ICARE is assisting in the coordination of the work of the various agencies. Other strengths that World Relief brings to the coalition are its church relations network and the supplying of church-based volunteer work crews. ICARE-member Habitat for Humanity excels in construc-

tion of homes. Other evangelical groups in the coalition include the Southern Baptists, Masterserve, Samaritan's Purse, and Youth for Christ in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale.

"Charity and government officials agree: It is the non-profit organizations and volunteers, most church-based and most from out of town, who are largely responsible for what little has been done in southern Dade County," reports *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*. Voluntary groups have been able to accomplish so much more than others "because we've been able to cut through the red tape," says Tom Willey, World Relief's Miami area director.

The rebuilding of Dade County is expected to take five years, thus volunteer groups continue to be needed. Groups interested in helping should contact Tom Willey by calling 305-541-8320.

NAE for its relief and development work around the world. (See the previous three pages to learn how this money was put to work.) Small amounts were given to the Disaster Response Program of the Church of the Brethren (\$1,000) and to the Cooperative Disaster Child Care Program (\$500).

Of the \$16,900 designated for Hurricane Andrew relief, another \$3,483 went to the Church of the Brethren Disaster Response Program for its relief work in Florida and Louisiana, and the rest to World Relief for its Hurricane Andrew relief work (see box). [†]

†Includes church contributions through January 1993 designated for 1992 as well as individual gifts sent directly to the National Office when the home church of the donor could be identified.

Elkhart First Brethren Church Dedicates Remodeled and Enlarged Church Building

Elkhart, Ind. — A dream of more than two years became reality on Sunday, February 7, at the Elkhart First Brethren Church when the congregation dedicated its remodeled and enlarged church building.

The remodeling and enlarging project was undertaken to provide additional space in the sanctuary, more room for Sunday school classes, and a larger area for fellowship.

Every room in the building was affected in some way by the work. Former office space was turned into an overflow area for the sanctuary, with the area doubling as Sunday school classrooms through use of a movable wall system. The old fellowship hall was transformed into three classrooms and a gathering area that can accommodate up to 40 people for a meal. The main new con-

struction was a 50-by 50-foot gymnasium.

The dedication program, which followed a carry-in dinner, was a progressive service in which each part of the building was dedicated in succession.

East side of the Elkhart Church building showing the exterior of the new gymnasium.

Photos by Pastor Timothy Garner.



Former office area was remodeled into two Sunday school classrooms. A movable wall system allows these rooms also to be used as sanctuary overflow space.

Men of Mission Plan to Work At Riverside Christian School

Ashland, Ohio — Completion of the new classroom building at Riverside Christian Training School in Lost Creek, Ky., has been selected as the summer work project for the Brethren Men of Mission.

The four weeks from June 14 to July 10 have been designated as work weeks. During those four weeks the men plan to complete the following jobs:

Electrical: hang ceiling fixtures; pull wires; install switches, outlets, alarm system, exit lights, and emergency lights.

Plumbing/Heating: run hot water pipe system from boiler room to classrooms; install room heater units.

Carpentry: build coat closets, storage units, and trophy cases; install chalkboards; hang doors.

Miscellaneous: install suspended ceiling and floor covering; paint walls; install fire escape; possibly other jobs.

With the completion of the above jobs by July 10, the remaining weeks until the beginning of school can be used to move into the classrooms. Additional help will be needed at that time to assist with the moving.

In order to complete the building, an estimated \$50,000 in additional funds is

The service began in the gymnasium, which was dedicated that all who enter might learn to know the Lord more fully through recreation, activities, fellowship, or Communion. The gathering area, with its picture window, was dedicated as a place from which to view the world and in which to envision and pray that the world might be reconciled to the Lord. Classrooms were dedicated for the

purpose of building up the body through learning and interaction.

The sanctuary was dedicated as a place in which the congregation's desire to worship and serve the Lord might be enlarged and in which hearts and lives would be filled to overflowing with God's love. The congregation also prayed for the Lord's help that this facility might continue to be a means of carrying on the unfinished task of reaching the lost with the truth of salvation and of increasing the faith of the gathered saints.

The cost in dollars of the remodeling and new construction was \$157,000. In addition, more than 55 individuals donated more than 600 hours of their time, which was spent in demolition, construction, clean-up, etc.

— reported by Sherry Houghton, secretary for the building committee

needed to purchase materials. Men of Mission groups are being asked to contribute toward this need. The staff at Riverside is also seeking to raise funds.

Letters with more details about the work project have been sent to pastors and local Men of Mission leaders. For additional information or to volunteer to help, contact Project Committee members Dorman Ronk of Ashland (419-281-3050) or DeWayne Lusch of Huntington, Ind. (219-356-3384).

Sometimes God calms the storm — and sometime He lets the storm rage and calms His child.

— Author unknown



Participating in the Nappanee mortgage burning are (l. to r.) Moderator Joe Baumgartner, Pastor Ken Hunn, Trustees Chairman Todd Sheets, Former Pastor Alvin Shiflett, and Finance Committee Chairman Merle Holden.

Nappanee First Brethren Church Burns Mortgage on Building Constructed in 1989

Nappanee, Ind. — With the words "He is good; His love endures forever" from 2 Chronicles 5, the congregation of the Nappanee First Brethren Church expressed its gratitude to God as it burned the mortgage on its four-year-old church facility on Sunday, March 14, during the ten o'clock worship service.

Just four years earlier the congregation had moved into its new \$750,000 facility with a \$300,000 debt. The mortgage-burning celebration was an expression of praise to God as the congregation gave witness to His miracles of provision during the short duration of the mortgage.

Special guests for the service were former pastor Dr. Alvin Shiflett and his wife Bunny. Dr. Shiflett pastored the Nappanee congregation for 17 years (until June 1990), including the period during which the new facility was constructed and dedicated.

During the service Dr. Shiflett presented a message on "Building the Church." Using 2 Chronicles

3:1-2 and 5:1 as his text, Dr. Shiflett gave a biblical perspective on how God has worked in the past through people who worship and serve Him.

The service also included a time of recognition for those who had given exceptional service during the planning, construction, and financing phases of the new church facility. Current moderator Dr. Joe Baumgartner recognized those who had served as moderator during the period; Chairman J.B. Stillson recognized members of the

Building Committee; and chairman Merle Holden recognized members of the Finance Committee.

Participating in the actual burning of the mortgage were Dr. Baumgartner; Mr. Holden; Todd Sheets, chairman of the trustees; Dr. Shiflett; and Rev. Ken Hunn, the current pastor of the congregation. The mortgage was set on fire using a torch (candle) that had passed through the congregation, signifying the beginning of a new era of service and witness to the Nappanee community.

Following this ceremony, Rev. Hunn challenged the congregation to look to the future in a message entitled "Victory Brings Vision." He called upon the Nappanee Brethren to use the "victory" of a debt-free building as the basis of a "vision" of what the Lord would yet do through them. He also challenged them to bring the changeless gospel to a changing world as a witness to the community and as an example for other Brethren churches. Following the challenge by Pastor Hunn, the 290 people in attendance participated in a litany of rededication of their own lives and of the church building to God.

Special music for the service was presented by both the Children's and Adult Choirs of the church. A fellowship meal in the church activity center followed the service.

The 24,000-square-foot church facility of the Nappanee congregation was dedicated on June 11, 1989. It includes a sanctuary that seats 400, an activity center with an 84- by 48-foot playing floor plus a stage at one end, a large kitchen, nine classrooms, a sewing room, a nursery, library, several offices, narthex, storage rooms, and rest rooms.

— reported by Pastor Ken Hunn



A fellowship meal in the church activity center followed the mortgage-burning service.

Dorothea Kerlin Honored by Milford Church For 50-Plus Years of Teaching Sunday School

Milford, Ind. — Dorothea Kerlin got a nice surprise during the worship service on St. Valentine's Day this year when at least one member of every family in the Milford First Brethren Church gave her a valentine.

Mrs. Kerlin received these cards not only to help her celebrate Valentine's Day, but also to show appreciation to her for her more than 50 years of teaching Sunday school at the church.

The day of honoring Mrs. Kerlin began during the Sunday school hour, when the Sunday school class she had taught until recently presented her a corsage. "I figured they must have been glad to have gotten rid of me since I retired from Sunday school teaching in January," Mrs. Kerlin remarked.

Then during the worship service Bruce Nile, chair of the ministry of education, called Mrs. Kerlin to the front of the sanctuary where he gave her a plaque and a dozen roses on behalf of the congregation. Following this presentation, Pastor Paul Tinkel asked, "I wonder if anyone else has anything for Dorothea?" Whereupon the little ones in the congregation came forward with valentines, followed by at least one member of every family in the congregation. "The highlight of the whole thing was that I got to kiss every man in the Church!" Mrs. Kerlin said.

Mrs. Kerlin began teaching Sunday school at the Milford Church in 1933. The 94-year-old has attended the church for 83 years and has served in almost every capacity in the congregation.

Her first Sunday school class was a group of children around 11 or 12 years

old, whom she taught until they completed high school. The last class she taught was a group of senior adults. One of the men in that class had also been



Dorothea Kerlin with her plaque and roses.



Members of the Milford First Brethren Church wait in line to present their valentines to Dorothea Kerlin.

Photos by Rich Rhodes.

a member of the first group she taught.

Even though Mrs. Kerlin has given up teaching Sunday school, she isn't about to retire from church activities. In addition to Sunday services, she attends a Tuesday morning prayer fellowship, a Wednesday 6:30 a.m. prayer session, and a Wednesday evening Bible class.

"I am noted for my association with this church," she says. "The church really means a lot to me. I believe it's the oldest building in Milford. It was built in 1883. I sit at my kitchen table to eat and I look out at my old church and I just pray that nothing happens to it."

"Because the building is old and is deteriorating, we are not sure what's going to happen to it. I've told everyone that they can't do anything to destroy this building until I die, and I keep living so they can't touch it."

Mrs. Kerlin says she feels that it's her goal in life to influence. She accomplished this goal not only by teaching Sunday school for more than 50 years, but also by serving as a librarian at the

Milford Library for 47 years. She retired from the library in 1973. In these positions she was able to influence the lives of many children.

— Both the content and the quotations in this article were taken from an article by Melissa Mielke that appeared in *The Mail Journal*, the local Milford newspaper.

"Witnesses to the World: Begin Where We Are" Is Theme of N. California District Conference

Manteca, Calif. — "Witnesses to the World: Begin Where We Are" (Acts 1:8 and Mark 5:19) was the theme of the Northern California District Conference held February 26-28 in Manteca at the Northgate Community Brethren Church. Alan Schmiedt of the Northgate congregation presided as moderator of the conference.

The district made good use of the denominational executives attending the conference, asking them to serve as speakers and workshop leaders. Ronald W. Waters addressed the conference Friday night on outreach in the local community. James R. Black spoke Sat-

urday night on outreach to the world. And David Cooksey addressed the subject of church leadership Sunday night. Attendances for the nightly inspirational meetings were up from previous years, topping 100 two evenings.

Three Saturday morning workshops were: "Spiritual Formation," led by Carolyn Cooksey and Fred Finks; "Passing On the Promise," led by Ronald W. Waters; and "Missions," led by James R. Black.

Other special events of the conference included a spaghetti dinner served by the host congregation and a conference singspiration that featured the musical talent of the district. Delicious snacks

were provided nightly after the services by district churches.

Tony Price, representing the National BYIC Steering Committee, assisted the district youth in organizing and planning for the future.

A total of 33 delegates and four alternates from the three churches were seated for the Saturday afternoon business meeting. Marshall Lehr from Northgate was installed as the new moderator. Newly elected officers were Mac Freeman, moderator-elect; Cheryl Schmiedt, secretary; Carolyn Bennett, treasurer; and Delores Soderfelt and Bill Nichols, members at-large of the board of directors.

The 1994 conference will be hosted by Stockton at a date to be set later.

— Ronald W. Waters

Everette and Irma Rodgers are Named Sweetheart Couple of Year at Mt. Olive

Pineville, Va. — Everette and Irma Rodgers were honored as "Sweetheart Couple of the Year" by the Mt. Olive Brethren Church February 14 at the congregation's annual Sweetheart Banquet.

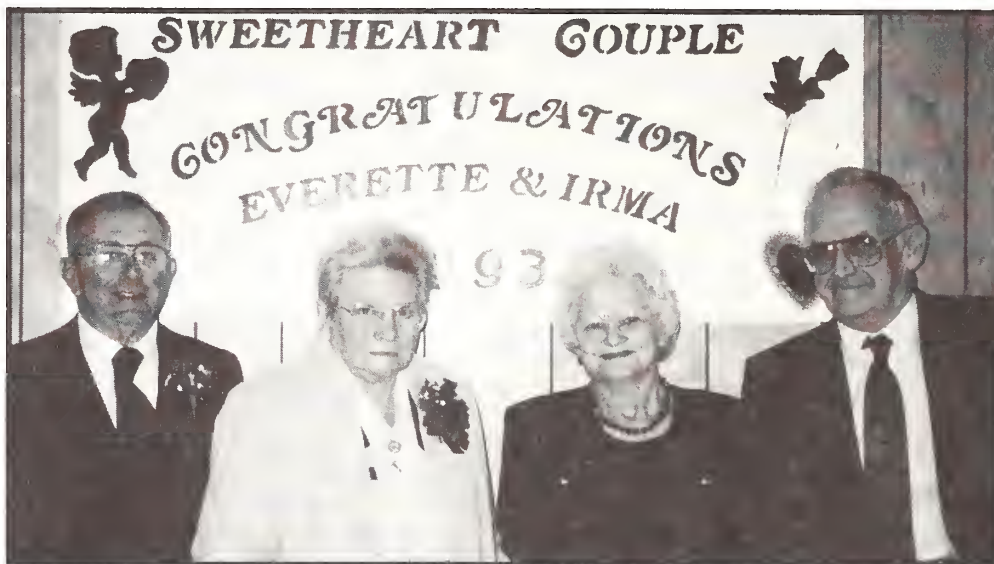
Approximately 110 people were present to honor the Rodgers and to share in the carry-in banquet. Many of those present expressed their appreciation for the friendship the Sweetheart Couple has shown them through the years. A table of pictures from the couple's past was on display for all to enjoy.

Everette and Irma were married on July 26, 1941. Both have been members of the Mount Olive Church for more than 50 years, and both serve on the Deacon Board. Everette currently is a Sunday school teacher and serves as director of Christian education. Irma helps with the Pioneer Youth Program and is a member of the W.M.S. They have three children — Douglas, Linda (Swanson), and Paulette (Symolon) — and twelve grandchildren, seven of whom are adopted.

A "How Well Do you Know Your Spouse?" game followed the meal, with four couples participating. David and Debbie Raynes and Mike and Becky

Lambert tied for the win, with David and Lisa Armstrong and Neil and Shelby Hinkle finishing close behind.

The banquet was planned by the Special Events Committee of the Mt. Olive Church, which also decorated the hall, provided a heart-shaped cake, and purchased corsages for the Sweetheart Couple.



Sweetheart Couple of the Year Everette and Irma Rodgers (l.) with last year's Sweetheart Couple, Margaret and Sam Hinkle.

Missions Tea at Masontown Puts Spotlight on Malaysia

Masontown, Pa. — Masontown Brethren had a special opportunity to learn more about Brethren mission work in the orient on March 7 at the church's Malaysian Missions Tea.

During the Sunday school hour all classes from junior high through senior citizen met together to learn more about

the work of Brethren missionaries David Loi in Johor Baru and David Chew in Penang, Malaysia. Pastor Russell King provided background by giving an overview of the nation of Malaysia and of Brethren mission work there. Then a video of Brethren worship services in Malaysia was viewed. The Masontown Brethren joined in singing hymns that were common to them and the Malaysian church. They also showed considerable interest in the

religious climate in Malaysia and in the strong outreach to young people that characterizes The Brethren Church in Malaysia.

Following the video, oriental refreshments were served by the Outreach Committee — Dorothy Hess, Herb DeBolt, and Ruth Cumley — which had also planned the event. More than 40 people enjoyed the tea, held in the church fellowship hall, which had been decorated with an oriental theme.



Masontown Pastor Russell King (l.) with Outreach Committee members (l. to r.) Dorothy Hess, Herb DeBolt, and Ruth Cumley, who planned the Missions Tea.

Prayers at City Hall Urged On National Day of Prayer

Tupelo, Miss. — Concerned Americans are being urged to "Meet at City Hall" to pray for our nation on Thursday, May 6, this year's National Day of Prayer.

Meet at City Hall is a simple concept. It involves people voluntarily meeting at their local city halls from 12:20 p.m. to 12:40 p.m. to pray for the moral rebirth of America. The event is open to anyone who wants to participate.

Last year people in approximately 3,500 communities across our nation met at their city halls to pray for our country. Sponsors of the event are hoping for an even greater turnout this year. Donald E. Wildmon, president of the American Family Association, serves as chair of the sponsoring group.

Dr. J.D. Hamel Overcomes Cancer; Holds Special Services at Bloomingdale Church

Valrico, Fla. — Dr. J.D. Hamel defied death and held special evangelistic services February 6 and 7 at the Bloomingdale Brethren Church.

The participation of Dr. Hamel was the most amazing part of the services, for just last December he was diagnosed with incurable, terminal cancer. God, however, cured the incurable, and Rev. Hamel is now completely free of the disease.

In addition to the messages by Dr. Hamel, the weekend services included a variety of special presentations. Steven and Shelly Miller from the Town and Country Brethren Church in Tampa sang a medley of choruses for the Saturday evening service. In addition, Jill Stone sang "How Beautiful (Is the Body of Christ)."

On Sunday evening, Janice Nelson sang and led singing in the style of her predominantly African-American church in Tampa. Ms. Nelson has had a wide range of professional musical

experiences, but she said that all that really matters is her B.A. (born again) in Jesus Christ.

The Sunday evening service also included a solo by Tom Ross, the church's moderator, who sang "When God Ran." In addition, Bloomingdale members Bill and Theresa Cruz performed a mime illustrating the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Many of those attending were moved to tears during this climatic service.

"We wish everyone in town could have seen what went on here this weekend," said Rev. David Stone, pastor of the Bloomingdale Church. "Those who attended were all blessed. We just pray that they were brought closer to God."

"The highlight of the event was when Julia Colletti, the mother of one of our members, came forward on Sunday night to publicly declare her faith in Jesus Christ and to request baptism."

— reported by Pastor David Stone



A healthy Dr. J.D. Hamel with banner announcing the evangelistic services at the Bloomingdale Church.

Rev. Mark Britton Installed As Pastor at Derby, Kansas

Derby, Kans. — Rev. Mark Britton was installed on Sunday, January 17, as pastor of the First Brethren Church of Derby.

Rev. Britton assumes the pastorate of the Derby Church as no stranger to the congregation, for he grew up in the

church. The Derby Church saw him off to Ashland College in 1979, and now welcomes him back as their pastor in 1993. In the intervening years he not only earned degrees at both Ashland College (University) and Ashland Theological Seminary, but he also married, and he and his wife Cathy have become the parents of three children — Ben, Emily, and Hanna. In addition, he served for four years as pastor of the First Brethren Church of Bryan, Ohio.

Rev. Reilly Smith, pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church, presented the message for the installation service. Derby moderator John Wehrman and deacon John Allison also took part in the service. Pastors from two other churches in Derby attended the installation service, as did several members of Mark's family.

A carry-in dinner followed the 4:00 p.m. installation service.

— reported by Linda Perrine, recording sec.



Rev. and Mrs. Mark Britton with Ben (l.), Emily, and Hanna (in her dad's arm).

Meyersdale W.M.S. Sponsors Unusual Service on S. America

Meyersdale, Pa — South America, its culture, climate, produce, and animal life, was the topic of a captivating Woman's Missionary Society public service held Wednesday evening, March 3, at Main Street Brethren Church in Meyersdale.

The program was presented by Mrs. Robin Jennings, daughter of Rev. Robert and Nancy Stahl (pastor and wife of the Main Street Church). Mrs. Jennings described the rain forests of South America — their exotic birds and wildlife and the chorus of noises that emanates from the forests both day and night. Using native music, audience participation, and props created under her direction by the young people in attendance, she both informed and entertained her audience.

Following the program, a taste meal of South American foods prepared by Mrs. Jennings was served. She explained that the foods were staples of South America. One of the main staples is beans, of which there are many varieties. Beans of one kind or another are used in some way daily in many parts of South America. Other foods in the taste meal included dried fruits, nuts, vegetables, and Brazilian coffee.

According to Helen Courtney, president of the Meyersdale W.M.S., Mrs. Jennings gave a "really refreshing and unusual program, very interesting and enjoyed by everyone." She suggested that others interested in having her present a program could contact Mrs. Jennings at the *Tribune Review* in Greensburg, Pa., where she works (phone 412-834-1151), or call her at her home (412-832-3998).

— reported by Helen Courtney

From The



Grape Vine

More than 30 people attended this year's Davenport Conference of the Central District, held February 19-20 at the Iowa Machine Shed Restaurant in Davenport, Iowa. All of the churches of the district were represented. The program included singing with guitar accompaniment by Rev. Bob Schubert, interim pastor of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church; readings by Joyce Michael; and small-group Bible studies of Moses and Joseph with group leadership by Phil Michael, moderator of the Central District, using materials prepared by Dr. Michael Gleason, Director of Religious Life at Ashland University.

The men of the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church held their annual Laymen's Bake-Off on March 6 to raise money

for the needy. The men of the church baked cakes which were judged in various categories, then auctioned off. The most unusual entry was monkey bread baked by Paul Fox; the most original was Canadian boiled fruitcake by Bill Nugen; the prettiest was Black Forest cherry cake baked by Pastor Bill Skeldon; and the entry raising the most money was a chocolate cake with peanut butter icing and banana trim by Kenneth Nuckels. Approximately \$250 was raised by the event.

Rev. and Mrs. James R. Black were guest speakers at a Mission Conference held March 19-21 at the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church. Shirley Black, president of National W.M.S., spoke at the Friday evening service, and Rev. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, spoke at a men's breakfast on Saturday morning and during the worship service on Sunday.

Yet another Nigerian church leader in *Ekklesiyar 'Yanuwa a Nigeria* (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) has died as a result of an automobile accident. Pastor Mai Sule Bui, a longtime EYN leader and evangelist, died December 20 of injuries from an accident that occurred December 13. The accident initially claimed the life of Rev. Boaz Maina (*reported in the*

February issue, p. 22), who had begun serving as general secretary of EYN following the October 11 death in an automobile accident of general secretary Dr. John Guli (*reported in the November issue, p. 19*).

Mai Sule, Boaz Maina, and four others were traveling to Maiduguri to participate



Pastor Mai Sule Bui

in an ordination service when the accident occurred. The left rear tire of the vehicle lost its tread, causing the car to veer off the road where it struck a tree. Boaz Maina died shortly after the accident, and Mai Sule died a week later from complications arising from internal injuries.

Two other passengers were also hospitalized, but they recovered from their injuries.

Pastor Mai Sule was noted as a hymn composer, musician, and song leader. He is fondly remembered by former Brethren missionaries to Nigeria. He visited the United States in 1972.

In Memory

Ellen Kiefer, 74, March 18. Faithful member for 65 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church, where she was active in W.M.S., served as a Sisterhood patroness, and held various church offices over the years. She raised thousands of dollars for missions by recycling aluminum cans. She was always willing to teach Sunday school or VBS or lead a Bible study. A 1940 graduate of Ashland University, she continued to be an avid AU sports fan throughout her life. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Inez M. Yankee, 90, March 17. Member of the Ardmore Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Shipman.

Don Kerr, 46, March 11. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Marcy Mabry, 51, March 10. Member of The Brethren Church at New Lebanon. Services by Pastor James F. Black.

Bradley Shawn Morris, 26, March 10 (of injuries suffered in an industrial accident). Member of the Loree First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Thomas.

Jesse R. Waldenville, 77, March 8. Friend of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Velma Irene Jones, 90, March 1. Charter member of the Kokomo First Brethren Church.

Shirley Ann Lamoreaux, 58, March 1. Friend of the Pleasant View Brethren Church. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Lavohn Amberg, 88, February 28. Member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Services by Rev. Woodrow Immel and Pastor Marlin McCann.

Helen Brnich, 65, February 28. Member of the Masontown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell King.

Frank E. Robarge, 80, February 26. Member for 49 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Russell Coy.

Norman D. Michael, 84, February 24. Member for 60 years of the Gratis First Brethren Church, where he served as Sunday school superintendent and teacher, trustee, treasurer for 13 years, and was a member of the Brethren Men of Mission. A carpenter by trade, he did some work at Riverside Christian Training School many years ago. Services by Rev. James F. Black.

Robert Ridenour, 83, January 30. Active member for many years of the Roann First Brethren

Church, where he served as Sunday school superintendent and teacher. A woodworker, he made various items for the church. He lived in Florida for a number of years, where he was active in the Sarasota First Brethren Church and designed the Sarasota Church building. Following retirement, he returned to Roann where he attended regularly until his death. Services by Pastor Phil Medsger.

Mae Miller, 85, January 22. Member for 15 years of the Roann First Brethren Church, where she was a deaconess and W.M.S. member and quietly helped many young people with her time and finances. Services by Pastor Phil Medsger.

B. Melvin Peugh, 70, December 28. Member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Kenneth Sullivan.

Goldenaires

Clifford and Vera Graft, 55th, April 30. Members of the Loree First Brethren Church.

Howard and Pauline Winfield, 60th, April 15. Members of The Brethren Church in New Lebanon.

Dale and Pauline Smith, 50th, February 14. Members of the First Brethren Church of North Manchester.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Teske, 50th, March 9. Members of the South Bend First Brethren Church.

Clayton and Virginia Parker, 55th, March 6. Members of the South Bend First Brethren Church.

Mr. and Mrs. John Baer, 50th, February 26. Members of the Goshen First Brethren Church.

Ned and Betty Dollinger, 50th, February 17. Attend the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Weddings

Rogene Deets to George Kepner, March 28, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church; Pastor Kenneth Sullivan officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

Kristine Ashton to Kyle Kimball, December 19, in Middletown, Ind.; Dr. Dan Lawson and Rev. David Waters officiating. Bride a member of the Oakville First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Warsaw: 4 by transfer

Cerro Gordo: 2 by transfer

Williamstown: 1 by baptism

Pleasant View: 3 by baptism

North Manchester: 2 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

April — a Time of New Life

April is an exciting time of the year. It is a time of new life. The dead-looking grass in our lawns turns green and starts to grow. Flower bulbs that were hidden in the ground all winter push green sprouts through the earth that grow up and produce crocuses, daffodils, tulips, hyacinths, and other flowers. Trees that have stood dark and lifeless all winter begin getting new leaves, and many of them burst forth with blossoms. The birds make nests and lay eggs, and soon baby birds hatch. Yes, April is an exciting time of new life.

How fortunate we are to live in a part of the world where Easter comes during this time of the year when new life is springing forth all around us! For Easter is a celebration of new life.

It is first of all a celebration of Jesus Christ's new life, of His resurrection. On a Friday many, many years ago (which we now celebrate as Good Friday) Jesus was crucified — nailed to a cross — where he hung until he died. Then His body was taken and put into a tomb. But just two days later, on Sunday morning (which we now celebrate as Easter Sunday), He arose from that tomb. He came back to life. Easter is a celebration of this wonderful event.

Easter is also a celebration of our new life in Jesus and of the promise we have of resurrection. God has promised to give new life to all who trust in Jesus as their saving Lord. We have new life in Him now. And we also have the promise that when we die, Jesus will raise us from the grave and take us to live with Him forever.

Yes, Easter is a celebration of new life, of resurrection. And in April, we have many reminders all around us of that new life. Trees that all winter looked as if they were dead now come back to life. Flowers that withered and died last summer or fall come to life again. All around us there are signs of new life.

These things can remind us of new life on Easter Sunday. And they can continue to remind us of the Easter message of resurrection and new life all during the month of April.

Word Puzzle

Following are several words that we often use at Easter. See if you can find these words in the box of letters at the right.



resurrection	tomb
stone	alleluia
earthquake	Mary
alive	Sunday
risen	Emmaus
life	new
forever	Jesus

A	R	B	C	M	A	R	G	H	I	J	K	L	S
M	N	E	O	P	Q	R	E	E	M	M	A	U	S
F	J	A	S	T	O	N	E	V	W	X	N	Y	Z
O	E	R	A	U	B	C	D	E	F	D	G	W	I
R	S	T	L	M	R	U	N	O	A	P	Q	E	S
E	U	H	V	W	V	R	X	Y	Z	S	T	N	N
V	S	Q	B	I	C	D	E	R	I	S	E	N	E
E	E	U	L	G	H	V	I	C	Z	L	I	F	G
R	W	A	K	L	I	M	N	O	T	H	I	J	K
N	E	K	B	L	C	D	F	G	O	I	L	F	T
M	N	E	A	P	Q	Y	R	A	M	R	O	S	E
V	A	L	L	E	L	U	I	A	B	W	X	N	Y

A Letter From Mark Baker

Brethren across the denomination were stunned by the sudden and unexpected death on March 4, 1993, of Rev. Mark Baker. Many of those same Brethren had wrestled in pray on Mark's behalf during the three-month period immediately before his death, as Mark had struggled with a life-threatening illness.

During that three-month period, Mark had tottered on the brink of death, then slowly began to recover. By mid-February, he had improved considerably and was looking forward to full recovery. But that was not to be. On March 4, blood clots that had probably developed in his legs during his long period of immobilization in the hospital reached his lungs and brought his life to an end.

Just one week before his death, Mark sent a letter to a number of his friends in which he told about his illness, reflected on what had happened to him and why, and shared his hopes for the future. Because Mark had become a part of the lives of so many Brethren people during his illness — even people who did not know him personally — this letter is being shared here. It is a testimony of Mark's faith, a faith that continues to speak to us in spite of Mark's death.

February 25, 1993

Dear Friends,

Greetings! If it seems like a lifetime since you have heard from me, in many ways it really has been. A lot has happened in the past three months, and I am glad to now have the opportunity to bring you up to date. As this letter is getting broad coverage, please excuse the duplication of information which you may already know!

Last December 7th I was finishing my Christmas cards and putting the lights on my tree. I went to bed without finishing either. To make a long story as short as possible, I awoke during the wee morning hours to go to the Goshen Hospital. I assumed I would be there for a day of tests to find out why I was not feeling well. As the saying goes, "Never assume anything."

Sometime during Tuesday night I started coughing up blood, and by Wednesday morning was taken to ICU. By that evening the doctors were offering no hope of my survival. They later determined my lungs were filled with blood and this was cutting off the oxygen to my other organs. I was placed in a medically induced paralysis and coma to keep me from moving and fighting the treatment. Any movement could have been fatal. To keep me alive they filled my lungs with pure oxygen and the pressure caused holes to blow in each lung. All the tests were returning negative and they were not able to determine a diagnosis of my illness.

God was already beginning to answer the many prayers on my behalf as I miraculously was able to hold on to life. By Friday the doctors had consulted with IU Medical Center in Indianapolis and the decision was made to fly me there. Though they doubted I would survive the flight, God sustained me and they began treat-

Rev.
Mark
E.
Baker



Rev. Mark E. Baker, 37, died unexpectedly Thursday morning, March 4, in Sarasota, Fla., following a three-month illness.

Mark was born July 24, 1955, to Harold W. and the late Lucile (Welch) Baker. He grew up in North Manchester, Ind., where he joined the North Manchester First Brethren Church in 1963.

He graduated from Manchester High School in 1973, from Ashland University in 1977, and from Ashland Theological Seminary (M. Div. degree) in 1980. During his years of study in Ashland, he spent two summers as a Crusader, one summer as a Missionary Intern, and served The Brethren Church as assistant to the director of Christian education for four years.

Mark was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church at the North Manchester Church on June 15, 1980. The following month he began serving in Carmel, Ind., as the founding pastor of what become the Carmel Brethren Church.

More recently, and until his death, he served as manager of the Bethel (Christian) Bookstore in Elkhart, Ind., and as senior buyer for the group of bookstores owned by the Bethel Publishing Company. He was also Minister of Music for the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church.

Rev. Baker's funeral service was held March 9 in the North Manchester Church, with the Revs. Marlin McCann and Woodrow Immel officiating. Also taking part in the service, sharing remarks and remembrances of Mark, were Brethren Elders Tim Garner, Dan Gray, Kerry Scott, and Ken Hunn; Rev. Rick Oltz of Bethel Publishing; Pauline Yoder (who shared Mark's interest in Russia); and close friend Rev. Wayne Grumbling. A large crowd, including numerous Brethren elders, attended the funeral.

A Mark Baker Memorial Fund has been established, with the proceeds to be used to carry on Mark's dream of taking the gospel to the Russian people. Checks may be made payable to the North Manchester First Brethren Church and designated for the Mark Baker Memorial Fund.

ment for four diseases simultaneously. Again the doctors were doubtful of survival, but I held on, according to the nurses, "second by second" for several days. Eventually that grew to "minute by minute" to "hour by hour." By the 18th, tests determined I had Wegener's Disease, and treatment for that was accelerated. I began to respond immediately and improve.

At this time they slowly began to bring me out of sedation. On Monday I regained consciousness and they attempted to remove the ventilator which had kept me breathing. I was unable to breathe on my own, so after only a few hours it was put back in. Those are my first memories after two weeks of being under sedation. I fortunately have no recollection of the events past that first Tuesday in the Goshen Hospital until that Monday before Christmas.

The rest of the story I do remember, and can relate first hand. I was still a little foggy the following day, but was able to understand that though I was in the hospital with a serious illness, the crisis was over. I believed I would be released by Christmas, go home, finish packing for Russia, and be ready to leave on time in January. Still a little foggy! The fog eventually cleared as the week progressed, and reality came into focus. I celebrated Christmas in the hospital, and my best present came the day after when they removed the ventilator, this time for good. The doctors by now had convinced me that I was going to have a long and slow recovery.

Three weeks of being fed by IV had taken a toll on my digestive system. My gall bladder was one of the casualties, and it was removed on the 10th of January. I continued to have digestive problems, but I was making great progress with the Wegener's. The doctors released me from the hospital on January 14th, and I began the recuperation process back at home [Goshen, Ind]. I've been able to spend much of February in Sarasota, Florida, however with the Grays.* This has been a big help to be out of the cold weather!

Wegener's Disease is very rare, and my case more than usual for the speed in which it attacked me. It is unknown as to the cause or origination of it, in my case or any other. It can affect various parts of the body, but is limited to my lungs, for which I am thankful. The doctors are very positive about a full recovery and my prognosis is for a normal life. I will be taking medication for probably a year, after which I can hopefully be weaned from it. In the meantime, I remain very weak, and have lung damage which makes it difficult for me to breathe. But each day I grow stronger, and am getting around fairly well.

My next doctor's appointment is in early March, at which time they will be able to monitor more progress with the Wegener's. I will need to continue to see the doctors regularly for check-ups for the next several months, as it will take some time to determine the permanent damage, if any, that I sustained.

I will be returning to work at Bethel Bookstore in March. God has been faithful in many ways, and His provision for this need is another example of His faithfulness and the faithfulness of His people. I also plan to

*Mark was at the Grays' home when he collapsed on the morning of March 4. He was rushed to Memorial Hospital in Sarasota, where he was pronounced dead.

be back to my music responsibilities at the the Napanee First Brethren Church as well.

Obviously the biggest change in my plans has been my departure date for missionary service in Russia. Needless to say, this has been a big disappointment for me, but God has provided the grace and strength to accept that He is in control of this and all situations. Everything remains in place for my service there, and when the doctor's give me medical clearance, I will be able to fulfill that call. As impatient as I may be, I must allow that to be in His timetable, and cannot begin to guess as to any date. Until that time I am thankful for the opportunities He will provide to use this experience for His glory.

The family of Mark E. Baker wishes to express its deep appreciation to all for their prayers, concern, and support for Mark, and for the many expressions of sympathy, love, and care to the family following Mark's death.

Many of you have given financially to support my ministry in Russia. All support moneys that have been given remain in the appropriate accounts ready for my use when I am able to leave for service. However, I have spoken with Campus Crusade, and they are willing to reimburse any gifts given to my account if that is your desire. I certainly understand if you feel it better stewardship of the Lord's resources to redirect these gifts at this time. Please notify me if this is your desire and I will see the necessary steps are taken.**

Truly God did work a miracle in the preservation of my life. He has also touched many thousands around the world to pray for me. I can't begin to relate the stories of how God has already used this illness to bring people closer to Him. For that I am thankful. And also to you for your prayers, support, and encouragement. I am truly blessed beyond expression.

I have learned many new things and undoubtedly have much more to understand. But I have experienced the power of prayer and the love of the Body of Christ in very real and powerful ways which I never experienced before. Thank you for sharing that with me. Please continue to pray that my recovery progresses rapidly, and that God's power will be evident to all through this process.

God's blessings to you this spring! I'll keep in touch and let you know what God is continuing to do in my life.

Sharing His Deep Love,
Mark

**With the death of Mark, his family understands that some who sent contributions for his support may wish to have their gifts returned. Every effort will be made to do so. Any money not requested to be returned will be used for the *real purpose* for which it was intended, *taking the gospel to the Russian people*. If you made a contribution and wish to have it returned, the family asks that you do the following:

- If you sent a gift directly to the Missionary Board, please contact the Missionary Board office.
- If you contributed through your local church, please contact your church.
- If you contributed directly to Campus Crusade, please do not contact Campus Crusade. Instead, contact Harold W. Baker (Mark's Father) at 104 W. Fourth St., N. Manchester, IN 46962.
- If you contributed directly to Mark, please contact Harold W. Baker at the address above.

In each case, please indicate the nature (cash or check), date, and amount of the gift, and your full name and address.

World Hunger:

What's the use of trying?

Hunger is one of the world's most persistent and frustrating problems. Despite decades of attention and effort, hunger continues to kill hundreds of thousands of people each year.

When we reflect on this, we may ask, "What's the use of trying to overcome hunger?" We may even be tempted to give up — to stop praying, stop giving, stop caring.

We can help some of the hungry.

Truly, the world's needs are great. And, certainly, we can't help everyone. But we can help some. And isn't that all that God asks of us, that we do what we can? In the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus praises those on His right hand not because they have eradicated hunger and poverty from the world, but because each has helped meet the needs of "one of the least of these my brethren."

We can make a difference.

We may not be able to feed the whole world, but we can make a difference, even if only in the lives of a few. And if each of us helps feed only one or two, think how many we will help altogether. It doesn't even take a lot of money. Just \$5.00 can keep a starving child from dying; or provide seeds for a family to grow its own food; or provide a week's worth of food for a refugee child.

Is there any use in trying? Certainly there is, and Jesus commands us to do so. Therefore, give generously this month through your local church. Or send your gift directly to:

World Relief
The Brethren Church, Inc.
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805



Somolia, January 1993

World Relief Photo by Jim Whitmer

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Are We Really Worth It?

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

HAVE YOU ever wondered why you were chosen to be born in the United States rather than in some other country of the world? Or what your life would have been like if you had been born in Africa or China or Yugoslavia rather than in America?

I sometimes think about such things. Why was I born here instead of in Somalia, for example? Could I have been born there? And if so, what would my life have been like? Not very pleasant, I would imagine. In fact, if my birth had taken place on the same date, but in Somalia — the son of Somalian parents — I probably wouldn't still be alive. In fact, there's a good possibility I wouldn't have survived my first two years.

Why was I chosen to be born in a land of abundance rather than in a land of hunger? How did it happen that I live in a free country rather than in a totalitarian land? Why was I born in a Christian land rather than in a Hindu or Buddhist or Islamic or pagan culture?

By God's grace I am where I am

Did I do something to merit being born here and not someplace else? Obviously not, for what could I have done before my birth to merit being born here? The only answer I can come up with is that it was by the grace of God that I'm here and not somewhere else.

Am I the only one who asks such questions? One of the current beer commercials in our hedonistic society chides us with the rhetorical question, "Why ask why?" But I think there is value in raising these questions from time to time.

I heard recently of a cartoon in which a man in his pajamas is kneeling by his bed in a lavishly furnished bedroom. He is praying, "And may we be worthy of consuming a disproportionate share of the world's resources."

The man is praying that he might be worthy. But the sad truth is that we as Americans have somehow gotten the idea that we really are worth it, that we somehow deserve to be among the 23 percent of the world's people who share 85 percent of the world's income.

We've worked hard to get it

But why are we worth it? What have we done to deserve it? Some will say it is because we've worked hard to get it. But while living in Nigeria, I observed people there who toiled much harder than most Americans work, and they did not have nearly as many of the good things of life.

Someone else will reply, "It may be true that they work harder, but we work smarter." This I will not deny. But how are we able to work smarter? Is it not because of the many educational and training opportunities that have been available to us, and the great body of technology that has been passed along to us? We have been blessed

not only with resources that others have had, but also with opportunities for education and training that others haven't enjoyed.

"What's your point?"

Perhaps by this time you are asking, "So what's your point?" It is this: So long as we believe that we deserve all the blessings we enjoy, "that we are worth it," we have no pricks of conscience about lavishing these blessings upon ourselves. But when we comprehend that we have these things because we were born by God's grace in a land of abundance and opportunity, we are more likely to share what we have with those who are not as fortunate.

Jesus said, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:28, *NIV*). In this passage Jesus is speaking primarily of the responsibilities entrusted to His followers. But the principle applies to material things as well.

We have been *given* much. Certainly, we've had to work to get it. But we've been fortunate enough to live in a land of plenty, of freedom, and of opportunity where we are able to enjoy the fruit of our labors.

Because we've been given much, *much is expected of us*. God expects us to use what we have for the benefit of others.

Are we really worth it? Did we do something to deserve all that we have? I think not. They are gifts of God's grace. And because they are God's gifts, we should be willing to freely share those gifts with others who have not been so generously blessed. [†]



Pontius' Puddle



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The May-June *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

About the cover: This month's cover is in honor of the 1993 Brethren high school and college graduates, as they look ahead to the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

You are to write your own answers this month. What are some things that are important to you?

With this issue we introduce a new *Little Crusader* page contributor. She is Mrs. Sandi Rowsey. Mrs. Rowsey lives in Ashland, Ohio, where she attends the Park Street Brethren Church. She and her husband, Tim, are the parents of three sons, Aaron (8), Jordan (3½), and Daniel (1¾). We welcome Mrs. Rowsey's first children's page to the EVANGELIST this month.



Developing a Heart For People With Disabilities

By Jeanette Sullivan

SO MANY TIMES we hear that our churches desire to minister to the "whole community." Outreach programs and church activities are often directed to youth, singles, young parents, or senior citizens — the target areas for most churches. But perhaps we have overlooked one significant group, as the following quotation suggests:

Over 17 percent of our United States population is disabled. That's 43 million people, each with a need for Christ and a life within the church. Estimates are that 95 percent of our disabled population is outside the church, as only 5 percent of our churches have ministry to people with disabilities. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) instructs us to take the gospel to all people. That includes people with disabilities. Why, then, are families with physically and mentally challenged children and adults absent, or so low in number, from most of our churches?*

Even though I am the parent of an adult child with disabilities and have, with my husband, struggled and even fought for educational

*A statement presented at a Joni and Friends Conference on the Church and Disabilities.

Mrs. Sullivan is a member of the Mill-edgeville, Ill., Brethren Church, where her husband, Ken, is the pastor. The Sullivan's daughter, Dianne (27), is visually and learning impaired.

services and appropriate recognition for the disabled, I was skeptical of such information. Our church has several individuals with various kinds of disabilities. As a body of believers, we have tried to reach out to each one in a loving and compassionate way, seeking to meet the needs of each.

But over the last several months my vision for ministry to the disabled has broadened, as I have considered the Great Commission and the statistics regarding the unchurched, disabled population. God has challenged me to go beyond my comfort zone in order to reach out to those within my church and community in a new way.

How this broadened vision came about began with our daughter, Dianne, and her dream: to meet Joni Eareckson Tada in person. Joni, a quadriplegic as the result of a tragic diving accident, is a well-known artist, writer, singer, and speaker. Dianne has been a faithful fan of Joni for a number of years, and she owns every print, book, tape, and video of Joni available. It is my responsibility each morning while Dianne is at work to record Joni's five-minute radio program so that Dianne can listen to it later in the day.

Because of her visual impairment, Dianne receives the Joni and Friends (JAF) Ministries newsletter on audio cassette. A little more than a year ago, an announcement in that publication caught her ear: On October 9 and 10, 1992, Joni would be in Akron, Ohio (our home town), for the Northeastern Ohio Conference on the Church and Dis-

abilities. A Saturday night concert with Joni would conclude the program.

For the next six to nine months the race was on to raise the necessary funds to attend the conference. Though Dianne's paycheck from the workshop for the disabled where she works is small, she saved not only the amount she needed for conference expenses, but also enough to fly us from Illinois to Ohio and back. The airlines were having a price war and we reaped the benefits — \$39 for each round-trip ticket! Finally, Dianne's dream was realized — she met Joni and secured front-row seats at the concert!

As I listened to Joni, participated in various workshops at the conference, met with parents and families as well as professionals, my complacency was challenged;



THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST

"A ministry to the disabled community affords the church a wonderful opportunity to display God's magnificent, unconditional, and impartial love before a watching world."

my vision stretched. The conference statistics overwhelmed me. Along with the fulfilled dreams of my daughter, I returned to Mill-edgeville with an armful of information, a long list of contacts, and a determination to step through whatever door God might open in order to make a difference to people with disabilities in our church and community.

From a JAF mailing, I learned that February was "Have a Heart for the Disabled" month. So in February, with the help of a video and study guide from Joni and Friends, I was privileged to lead a Sunday evening group through a study on "Disability Awareness." In the two-session presentation we learned how to:

- view disabilities and disabled persons from God's perspective.
- open the hearts and doors of our church wider to the disabled.
- take the first steps in making Christ real to people with disabilities through our personal witness.
- consider together the next steps in helping our church become aware and responsive to the "whole" community.

We learned that our words communicate what we feel and what we believe. A basic understanding of the words "disability" and "handicap" is important as we consider our attitudes and motivation for reaching out to the disabled. A "disability" is a physical or mental impairment that restricts or limits activity, whereas a "handicap" is any encumbrance that makes success more difficult to achieve.

Most of the participants in these sessions came with their own views about the disabled and what they felt were obvious needs. At the top of their list was church accessibility. But before we could talk about how to make our church more accessible to people with disabilities, we had to have a biblical

base from which to make those decisions.

**What God's Word Says
About the Subject**

We searched the scriptures and found answers to questions such as: "Where did disability come from in the first place?" "Is it a mistake when someone is born with a disability?" "Why does God address the issue of disability so many times in Scripture?"

Romans 8:28 underscores God's sovereignty over accidents and injuries in our lives. He is able to work even tragic events for our good. Following are but a few of the scriptures studied:

Romans 8:18 21: *"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God."*

Psalms 139:13-16: *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully*

**Quotations from the Bible, except where otherwise noted, are from the New International Version.*

and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.



Dianne Sullivan (r.) realizes her long-held dream of meeting Joni Eareckson Tada. (Child unidentified.)

Romans 11:33-34: *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"*

John 9:1-3: *As [Jesus] went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

The following verses further

"Considering whether or not a church should start a ministry to the disabled is a little like deciding whether or not a church ought to reach out to lost people."

address the response God desires from His people: Isaiah 58:10; Luke 10:27; John 15:13; Romans 15:1; Galatians 6:2; James 1:27. It was exciting to see from God's word that no other person models the proper attitude towards disabilities better than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

The Church's Ministry to the Disabled

People with disabilities, many [of whom] spend aimless days wishing for a better life and hoping for a chance to shake the "handicaps" that encumber them in their disabilities, need comfort and hope from God's Word and His people. The Bible makes it clear that we, the church, are the ones who can and should provide what is needed.

— *Joni Eareckson Tada*

A ministry to the disabled community affords the church a wonderful opportunity to display God's magnificent, unconditional, and impartial love before a watching world. God can take a ministry to those whom the world views as unlovely, embarrassing, or unfortunate and turn that ministry into a visible, concrete, and powerful display of His love.

The Apostle Paul expressed it well when he wrote, "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things . . ." (1 Cor. 1:27-28a).

Why should the church reach out in ministry to the disabled? Though our reasons may lean toward the subjective, our focus needs to be on the objective:

1. Disabled people *are people* — people made in the image of God. Our focus shouldn't be on their physical or mental disabilities; they are no less marred and no less capable of restoration than the rest of His creation.

2. There is a biblical mandate

that we not prefer one over the other: "My Brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory" (James 2:1, *RSV*).

3. The church is called to reach out to the poor, the needy, the destitute and the hurting.

Considering whether or not a church should start a ministry to the disabled is a little like deciding whether or not a church ought to reach out to lost people. In view of Scripture, deciding is not the issue. If we believe the Bible, we have to carry out its dictates. It is a tremendous privilege! Disabled people add a dimension of richness to the whole church family."

Getting Started

A World Relief poster on our church bulletin board reads: "How do you feed a hungry world? . . . One at a time." Even with so many different kinds of disabilities and so many hurting people, meeting their needs is much the same as meeting the needs of the hungry. Start one at a time . . . with your church families, including their extended families. It is amazing to find the many disabled individuals among them!

The pastor's role is critical to the success of any ministry within the church — and particularly so for a ministry to the disabled population — for he is the conscience of the congregation. Though his caring heart is contagious to the congregation, his main responsibility is to heighten the congregation's awareness of what God's word teaches regarding the disabled. Informing the congregation that there is a need for this ministry often begins with him or with other leaders in the church. The pastor's commitment to pray for such a ministry and to guide his flock as they pray and wait for God's direction is im-

*John MacArthur, Jr., *The Church: The Body of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973).

perative. If it is God's will for a ministry to the disabled community to be undertaken, He will cause a leader to emerge from within the congregation.

Disabled People Have Value in God's Kingdom

Paul's discourse on "body integration" in 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 punctuates the indispensability of the weaker members in the life of the church. The body is incomplete without them. As we seek God's compassion and "develop a heart for the disabled," we can make a difference in those dismal statistics. In my own church, the level of disability awareness has been raised and ministry opportunities are being explored as we seek God's vision and direction.

Having a heart for the disabled can best be summed up in these remarks made by Joni Tada at the close of the Northeast Ohio Conference on the Church and Disabilities:

When we open our eyes to the needs of people around us, and when we lend a hand, we're letting others see the caring heart of the Lord Jesus. We all want our faith to have an influence in our communities . . . for our churches to stand as a cultural witness to our society. Society, especially on the issue of disabilities, needs help. Even though our country has engineered legislation and proclamations, it cannot legislate the love behind the laws. It cannot ascribe dignity and hope and worth to disabled people. Only the church and the message of God's love can give lasting dignity and hope. Your love, the love of your church can be salt and light in your community and to society as a whole. [†]

Joni and Friends (JAF) is a non-profit Christian ministry dedicated to accelerating Christian ministry in the disabled community. Under the leadership of Joni Eareckson Tada, JAF brings people with disabilities and the church together in programs of evangelism, training, and practical assistance. For more information write to Joni and Friends, P.O. Box 3333, Agoura Hills, CA 91301.

Good Things Are Happening In The Brethren Church

David Cooksey shares some of the good news within our denomination.

IT IS ALWAYS EASY to complain about things that aren't going well. But I'd like to share with you instead some of the good things that are happening in The Brethren Church and tell you why I think they are happening.

In a significant number of Brethren churches, growth is occurring. In those churches enthusiasm is evident, even to the casual observer who visits for only a day.

The pastor of such a church is like a tour guide in an activity center where many good things are happening at one time. He might show you around and say, "Over here is Sue; she works with the pre-school. The children are drawing pictures to give to grandparents. They will be able to share the whole story of the picture when they give it to grandma.

"Over there is Jim, who works with our junior and senior high youth. They love him and have big plans to spend time together this summer. They've already had some great weekends this winter."

These and other groups come together in the sanctuary to sing, share, and pray together. The pastor opens the word and the Spirit blesses their worship.

A climate of love

These things are not happening by chance. The connecting thread is that the pastor loves the people and they love him. He knows their names, their work, their joys, their sorrows. The church leadership works hand in hand with the pastor. When problems arise (and they do), they are dealt with quickly and in love, and they are not allowed to become topics of gossip.

The underlying goal of these churches is to bring the unchurched to Christ within a caring, healthy

environment. New people are not just allowed to attend, they are encouraged to become a part of everything that is going on.

Hearts for the hurting

A second thing I have observed in these churches is that deacons and others in the congregation have hearts for the hurting. They are helping individuals one on one with their personal needs. Support groups are formed, not just so people can share their misery, but so they can work toward recovery. The goal is restoration through the power of Christ and a life of hope and productivity. Persons who have had problems are not disqualified from ministry, but are allowed instead to be involved in ministry as whole persons, forgiven and living in the grace of God.

I have also seen what I consider to be a positive number of individuals being called from within congregations to serve either as paid or volunteer staff. Others are going to seminary, sent there by the church, which recognizes their gifts for ministry. With our stated denominational vision for church planting, we are going to need all of these and more to supply the leadership necessary to realize that vision.

The best part of all this is that none of these changes have occurred at the expense of our Brethren heritage. Our heritage is grounded in faith and Scripture. Sometimes we Brethren have been unwilling to make changes in the church for fear that we might destroy that foundation. But this need not be the case.

The churches that I have observed recently which are doing good things and are growing have dared to examine themselves against the basic purpose for which they exist. They have coupled this with faith and action,

Following is a sampling of some of the good things that have been happening.

The Washington, D.C., Brethren Church, which had dwindled to about a dozen in attendance, had 105 present for worship on Easter Sunday. Rickey Bolden began pastoring the congregation last September.

Northgate Brethren Church in Manteca, Calif., is experiencing positive attitudes within the congregation and effective outreach to the community. Good influences for them have included the *Living Proof* video series and a moving mime presentation by people of the church. Roger Stogsdill is the pastor.

Northwest Brethren Chapel of Tucson, Ariz., has been experiencing growth and plans to build a new building this year to meet "growing" needs. Dave West is the pastor.

The Brush Valley Brethren Church near Adrian, Pa., has gone to two services and had 303 in worship on Easter. Pastor Jim Kirkendall attributes the growth to the members, who are involved in a wide range of ministries and who are excited about serving the Lord.

I have heard similar good news about the Stockton, Mt. Olive, Winding Waters, Iglesia Hispaña, North Manchester, Corinth, Grctna, and University Brethren churches. And there are others I haven't heard about.

depending on the Holy Spirit to bless and to work in their midst.

The world is hopeless; the church is full of hope. I am convinced that the Brethren can and must meet the needs of people who look to the church for that hope. In our negative, desperate world, we have the answers. We have them in our living Lord Jesus Christ and His timeless word.

Good things are happening in The Brethren Church. They are built on a solid foundation. Much more can happen if we allow it to happen in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. [†]

Rev. Cooksey is Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church.



Six Ways To Help Your Teens Gain Self-Esteem

by Margaret Houk

THERE'S NOTHING teens need more than self-esteem. They want it. God wants it for them. But it is very hard to come by during those trying adolescent years.

People can't give others self-esteem. It's a do-it-yourself job. But there are ways you can help your teens along the road. Here are six:

1. Listen to them.

Nothing convinces human beings that they are important and valued as much as getting the undivided time and attention of another human being, even if it is only for two minutes.

Good listening requires that we do not judge and that we appreciate the messages, no matter how hard they might be to accept.

Vivacious, free-souled Sarah blurted out in her confirmation class one day, "How do we know there is a God? How do we know that isn't just a story our parents are telling us?"

Teen messages can be pretty far-out. One imaginative young friend said, "I think God is an alien. He is from outer space, isn't He?" Sometimes they are disheartening. Fourteen-year-old pensive Steve muttered right after his parents separated, "I've decided to become an atheist."

We must all sooner or later question the faith we inherited in order

to have one of our own. Though the above kinds of messages may appear spiritually threatening, they are usually nothing more than colorful door-openers to spiritual maturity.

2. Affirm them.

Everybody needs praise, but no one more so than a teen. With their bodies growing fast, interests shifting gears, and emotions running rampant, they are bound to goof up. But they also have moments of glorious sunlight, as when Reneé assisted a little Sunday school child who had skinned a knee, or when Jon visited with 89-year-old hunchbacked Agnes after church one Sunday.

All teens have clearly-visible gifts from God. Some are strong leaders, others reverent followers. Some are aggressive, others quiet and retiring. All of these personality traits are equally important to God and are needed to fulfill His purposes in those persons' lives.

3. Help them to affirm themselves.

Teens wanting to feel good about themselves are fighting a gargantuan battle. Already extremely self-critical, they face many external put-me-down messages from our self-deprecating society. Subtle media messages continuously tell us we are either too young or too old, too skinny or too fat, or not quite "cool."

Teach your teens to screen what they are seeing and hearing, and to replace negative messages with positive ones. To a teen distressed

about being a bit shorter and heavier than average, you might say, "The world is full of different kinds of people — tall, short, thin, hefty. That's what makes the world interesting. Wouldn't it be a boring world if we were all alike?"

"You are created by God a unique, important, special human being, loved by Him and by many other people — social friends, family, and church friends. God has a purpose for your life. Whatever you are is right for the job."

What about teens who are so obese that their health is endangered? "God loves you just as you are. But He wants all of us to take good care of our bodies because we can serve Him best that way. Work with your doctor towards the best healthy state you can have."

Encourage your teens to affirm themselves frequently and regularly.

4. Give them responsibility.

When my third daughter left home at eighteen to move into her own apartment, she was terrified. Her big fear? "I can't make it!" (She put herself on a strict budget and managed well.)

In a complex world such as ours, this fear is valid. Young adults need elaborate, independent living skills — care of self, home, car, moneys, and time-planning. They must make decisions frequently about their responsibilities toward others and toward God. Anything teens can do to prepare themselves — care of their possessions, household chores, church group duties — not only sets a foundation but also raises their confidence.

Mrs. Houk is a free-lance writer and the author of the book, That Very Special Person—Me!, Self-Esteem for Teens, Herald Press, 1990. She lives in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Teens often avoid responsibility. "Aw, do I *have* to empty the waste-baskets?"

Doing what we don't want to do builds character. It requires self-discipline. People hesitate out of rebellion or laziness. But there is a certain amount of healthy pride and honor that comes with taking hold of an unpleasant or uncomfortable task. If the above teen does empty the baskets, and does it well, he will feel good about himself. If he doesn't, he won't.

5. Let them fail.

Parents often take on responsibilities teens could handle because teens forget, goof up the job, or don't get things done fast enough. Letting them do for themselves takes more time, involves aggravation, and subjects situations to failure. But teens need the experience of slipping and falling.

Before long, no one will be there to pick up after them. The road to adulthood is easier for them if we

allow them the painful consequences of irresponsibility. The more often they have to take hold lest they let somebody down, the faster they will be able to face the world with grace.

If and when they flub up, let them correct the situation themselves. Be firm, but keep it light. "I'm sorry you forgot to call your list about the hayride, Sally. That happens. Why don't you call and apologize? I'm sure they'll understand."

Teens often hang on to past mistakes in bouts of rehashed guilt, self-pity, and self-condemnation. God wants us to regret our mistakes, apologize, and make amends. But He also wants us to put these negative situations behind us so that we can direct our energies in positive ways, such as in helping others.

To help your teens cross this bridge, point out that when they put their mistakes behind them, they are more fun to have around and their friends enjoy them more.

6. Encourage them to treasure their relationships.

Joy is sweeter and sorrow diminished when two share the burden of one. Our relationships with others — parents, friends, siblings, neighbors — bring us our greatest joys and deepest sorrows. Essential to self-esteem, then, is the building and maintaining of satisfying relationships.

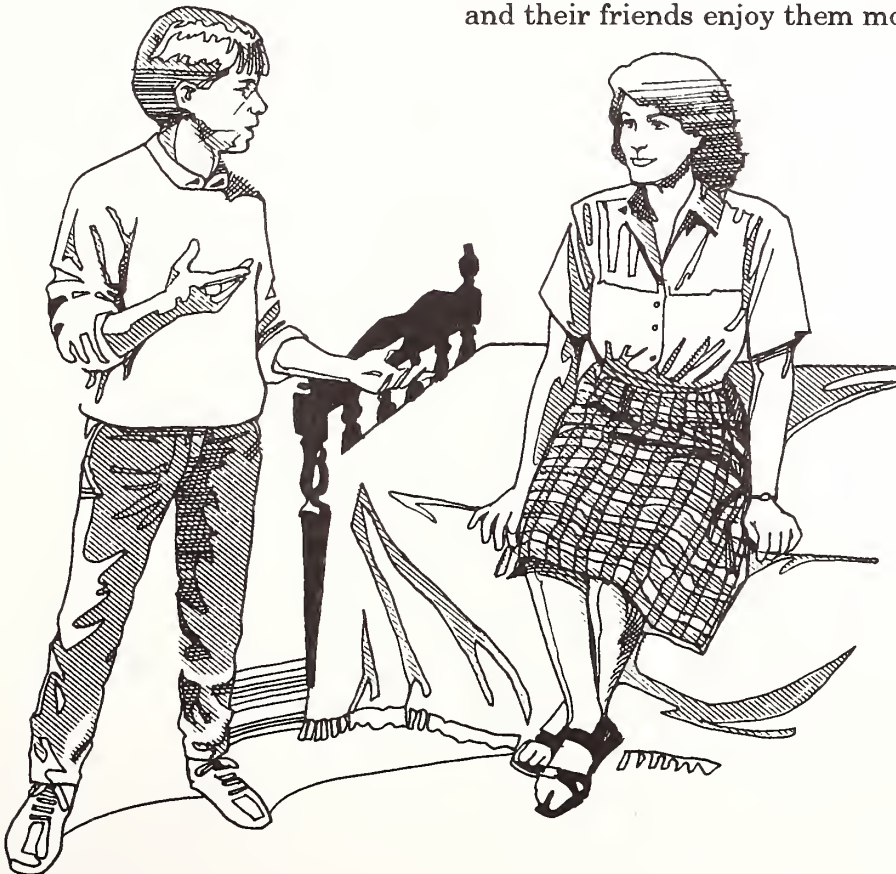
Encourage your teens to communicate in healthy ways. Twisted messages (those based on what the teen thinks others want to hear rather than the teen's genuine ideas and feelings) foul up relationships. So do messages that pressure or manipulate others. Honest, straightforward communication not only clears the air but also works and feels better.

Communication is a skilled art, one that is never perfectly learned. No matter how hard people try, sooner or later they run into conflict. Urge your teens to resolve their conflicts quickly and in a spirit of lovingkindness. Point out that the aim is to heal a treasured, damaged relationship — not to prove who is right or wrong.

There are many ways of settling differences, but teens in conflict usually see only two: my way and your way. Suggest that they try compromise, finding a middle ground, or trading off as possible alternatives. (Finding a middle ground is finding a solution that both parties like. Trading off is following one person's choice one time, the other person's the next.)

Psychologists say that we must love ourselves if we are to love other people God's way — unselfishly. To accomplish this we need self-esteem. By listening to your teens, affirming them, helping them plant seeds of self-affirmation, expecting responsible behavior, letting them fail, and showing them how to get along better with others, you can and will help them on their way.

[†]



Dependence on God

By David Oligee

Jesus said: *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. . . . These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

John 15:4-5, 11, *KJV*

WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD through the grapevine? Jesus used the analogy of a grapevine to communicate the most important element of obedience to Him. Our obedience must grow out of a close relationship with our Lord.

Just as a branch of a grapevine produces fruit only as it is connected to and drawing nourishment from the vine, so too we can produce the fruits of obedience only as we are continually connected to and drawing nourishment and strength from our Lord.

A life of joy

This kind of life, a life of ongoing dependence on Christ, not only pleases Him, but it also produces the greatest joy in us (John 15:11). So what we are considering is not a morbid resignation to a life of misery as we carry out our duties to God, but a life that will give us the greatest sense of personal fulfillment. That sense of satisfaction and fruitfulness come as we “abide” in Christ.

Rev. Oligee is pastor of the West Alexandria, Ohio, First Brethren Church. This article appeared in the West Alexandria Church newsletter and is reprinted here with Rev. Oligee's permission.

Exactly how do we “abide” in Christ? To live in close relationship with Christ, we must depend on Him for wisdom, strength, and direction in life. To have an intimate relationship with Him, we must not be deliberately holding on to some rebellious attitude or action

“Abiding also means that we listen attentively to what God has to say to us in the Bible — not merely getting our quota of Bible reading for the day, but thinking and praying about what we are reading.”

that we know we should confess and forsake. The barrier to our relationship will be removed and we will be forgiven if we confess our sins (1 John 1:5-10).

Abiding also means that we listen attentively to what God has to say to us in the Bible — not merely getting our quota of Bible reading for the day, but thinking and praying about what we are reading. Just as you show respect and love for a person who is talking to you by carefully listening and responding, so too we need to make our time of Bible reading an occasion to get to know God.

To abide also means that we spend time expressing to the Lord our deepest thoughts, hurts, and desires, as well as the details of our lives. He wants us to talk to Him about our successes and our sources of shame. He cares about us!

Bible teacher Warren Wiersbe in his book, *Be Transformed*, writes: “Once you have begun to cultivate this deeper communion with Christ, you have no desire to return to the shallow life of a careless Christian.”

The matter of abiding in Christ is essential if we want to please God. We cannot live the Christian life in our own strength by the power of our own will. We must live in continual reliance on Christ. Jesus said, “. . . without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5, *KJV*). He did not say we could do something or a few things. He said we could do nothing to please God without His working in and through us.

A life of faith

Just as we were saved by God's grace through faith in Christ (Eph. 2:8-9), we are now to live for God by trusting Christ. The Apostle Paul made this point in his letter to the Galatian believers. He said, “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” (Gal. 3:3, *KJV*). And to the Romans, Paul wrote, “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:17, *KJV*).

Faith requires dependence on God, relying completely on Him — first for our salvation and then for the ability to live the Christian life. [†]

MOST OF US want God, but we do not want to go through the “work” of the relationship of real love. We want it easy. We want it fast. But real work must be done before the perfection of a real love relationship with God can be experienced.

*From The Master Musician
by John Michael Talbot
(Zondervan, 1992)*

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



May-June 1993

Volume 6, Number 5

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

Spring is right around the corner! The calendar says spring, but the weather says winter. We do know that soon we will see flowers, green grass, and sunshine. We also know that God is in control. He created the heaven and earth—what an amazing thing! God also created mankind—a marvelous creation. He had a plan for all mankind. God also had a plan for the universe, for the sun, and the stars. He did not create without a plan for everything. The Lord desired that we love and serve Him. He created us in His image, but with a mind of our own. We make our own choices.

As we approach springtime, we are reminded of what God has created for us to enjoy. So many things we take for granted. As I look outside, I can see some flowers trying to push through the hard ground. Soon they will be up with bright colors. On the Ashland University campus, the grounds workers are already beginning to rake and get ready for all of the beautiful flowers that will pop up from the ground and for all the ones that will be freshly planted. Spring is a time for new things, new beginnings, new choices. Why not look around you and be thankful for the beauty of the season.

This is a good time to promise yourself to spend time in reading the Bible. If you do not have a set time for daily devotions, now is a good time to start. It will make your day much smoother, if you have devotions in the morning. If you have your devotions in the evening, you will have a peaceful sleep. Try it—I'm sure you'll like it.

National Conference is not too far away. August will be here before you know it. We will have five missionary families at conference this year: the Aspinalls, Winters, Kerners, Eagles, and Ruggles. Isn't that exciting! The Aspinalls and Winters are retiring from the mission field in Argentina. As they prepare to finish their work and

(continued on page 2)

MRS. NOAH

Devotions presented at General Conference, August 6, 1992,
by Norma Trump

Text: "By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith"
Hebrews 11:7 (NIV)

We live in a wicked world. There are jealousy and murder, lying and hatred, idol worshipers, sexual immorality. Sin is every place! I think God must be sorry that He created man on the earth. It used to be such a beautiful place.

Noah and I have three sons and, believe me, it's a hard job to raise our family. Noah walks with God and so do I. We taught our sons to love God. They are big boys now and have nice wives. And you know it must be true, for a mother-in-law to say that!

Well, one day God talked with Noah. God had seen enough of this sinful earth and He was going to destroy it. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God said He would spare Noah and his family (that's us), but Noah had to build an ark. When Noah told me this, I said "A what? What's that?" We didn't know what rain was, so I had no idea what a flood would be.

But Noah was determined to obey God's instructions, no matter how absurd they sounded. He started to work early in the morning and continued late into the night. This thing was big! The neighbors were interested at first. They didn't know what an ark was either. As it took shape, their interest turned to curiosity, then mockery, and ridicule. Why was Noah doing this? And then they jeered. An ark in the desert? Oh, Noah!

But Noah stood firm. He tried to warn them about their evil ways; he wanted them to repent, but they just mocked him.

When the ark was built, Noah did the next thing God instructed. He gathered in the animals, a male and female (you know about that) of every kind, fowls, creepy crawlers. Even I doubted that Noah could catch everything, but he did! And then we got in

— Shem, Ham, and Japheth and their nice wives, Noah and me and God shut the door.

Well, when we all were in, it was crowded. Then it got hot and smelly, and all we did was sit there. And the neighbors laughed and shouted! It's a good thing the window was at the top of this thing, so we couldn't see them, but we could sure hear them. "Sure, Noah, where's the rain? Are you sure you heard your God correctly? Beautiful day out here, Noah." And we still sat there.

Seven days later we had a light rain. It sounded so nice up on the roof and the people cheered. This was new to them and they laughed and played. Oh! Noah did say it would rain sometime, but still we sat. In a few days, though, we felt the ark beginning to shift side to side. That was a nice rocking feeling. And then, suddenly, we began to move. Then we heard our neighbors, crying and screaming, begging for Noah to open the door for them. But it was too late for those wicked people; God had shut the door.

The rains kept coming and we had these animals every place. I tried to clean the ark, but that was impossible! Finally Noah reassured me, "Just be patient, wife." And those animals really were nice.

After a long time, Noah saw the sky was lighter from the window at the top of the ark. He sent out a dove, but she soon returned. My, we were glad for that breath of fresh air through the window! One week later, he sent out the dove again. This time she returned with an olive leaf—Noah speculated the tree tops were above the water level. Now we were getting cabin fever—very anxious to get out. Well, another week passed and out went the

(continued on page 3)

Missionary Miscellany

As Shirley Black wrote, the Aspinalls and Winters will terminate their foreign missionary service this summer. We will welcome them back into the United States. Pray for them as they complete their responsibilities, make decisions about what to bring with them and what to distribute there. Can you imagine their dilemma after 30 and 20 years respectively? Pray for Allen Baer, who will continue in Beunos Aires as the overseer of the churches. And pray for the national church leaders who will assume new positions of leadership.

Dave and Diane Kerner and their three children will be on furlough this summer, too. Dave continues to give leadership training to the Colombia Brethren Church in Bogotá and Diane teaches in the kindergarten for missionary children. They plan to return to Colombia following their furlough.

Ken and Carolyn Solomon are located in Medellín, Colombia, and are kept extremely busy in ministering in any situation that arises. They distribute many tracts and use every opportunity to witness and minister. Many of the people that Ken knew previously as children are those adults to whom he and Carolyn are ministering now.

One of Carolyn's gifts is hospitality, and she cooks many extra meals as she and Ken entertain in their home or visit with people and share the Gospel. Medellín continues to be a dangerous city and sometimes violence hits close to home. A neighbor across the street, whom the Solomons had visited recently when he and his wife had a new baby, was killed along with six others in a drug-related incident. Another time, people were just leaving their worship service, when they heard shots fired. Three people were killed in the block where they worshiped.

Please pray for the Lord's hand of protection to be on the Kerners and the Solomons.

Todd and Tracy Ruggles and Tim and Jan Eagle are having good experiences in language school. Tracy wrote about the family with whom they live: the father Jorge, the mother Clarita, and children Jorge, Jr. (15 years) and Maria (14 years). Todd and Tracy are the "children Americana." The family does not speak English, so the Ruggles have Spanish full-time, even the TV news and radio.

Their school classes include grammar, conferences, conversations, composition writing, and cultural songs,

dance, and expressions. Tracy and Jan will enroll in a cooking class, where they will learn to prepare Mexican dishes and the use of different spices and herbs.

Their meal schedule is very different. Breakfast is before school, between 7-8 a.m., and is usually a good size meal (eggs, tortillas, fresh squeezed juice, fruit, and coffee). Lunch is about 2:30-4 p.m. and is a very large meal, much like our supper: meat, lots of vegetables, and usually fruit for dessert. Around 8:30-10 p.m. is dinner. This is usually only coffee and breads, a light meal so there's not much on your stomach before bed.

All of them appreciate their mail and prayer support. Tracy listed these specific prayer requests:

(1) We will continue to grow with God each day and be witnesses to other students and instructors, as well as our "family."

(2) We will continue to learn and put into practice what we are learning with language and culture.

(3) The Lord will continue to give us physical and mental strength, since our course is very intensive.

(4) Pray for the people of Mexico, that they will be open to the gospel, and for our national pastors, that they will continue to have success in their ministry and feel God's continual presence.



The President's Pen (continued)

plan to return to the United States, please pray for them. I am sure that this will be a very difficult time for them. They will be leaving many friends whom they have learned to love as family.

Plan to come to National Conference this year and say hello to all of the missionaries that will be there. I look forward to seeing many of you in August.

In Christian Love,
Shirley Black

LOOK!

WOMEN CAN BE "MEN OF MISSION," TOO

The Men of Mission have chosen the completion of the Riverside School for their summer work project. Remember the Men of Mission have helped to build churches during the past few summers, so they are experienced and anxious to continue using their abilities and energies for the Lord's work.

The four weeks from June 14 to July 10 are designated as work weeks. There are lots of jobs to do: electrical, plumbing/heating, carpentry, painting, and lots of miscellaneous. After July 10, the remaining weeks until school are designated for putting on the finishing touches and moving into the classrooms. Work teams are needed and so are funds. The MOM committee has asked churches to take some money with them to help purchase materials. In order to complete the building, an estimated \$50,000 is needed. Of course, the Riverside School is seeking funds, too.

Workers are needed for all of the above jobs and cooks. Women are invited to help. Refer to the April Brethren Evangelist for information; letters with additional data were sent to pastors and local MOM leaders. Contact Dorman Ronk (419-281-3050) in Ashland or DeWayne Lusch in Huntington, Indiana (219-356-3384), if you have questions and for scheduling. Doran and Nancy Hostetler are excited about the work teams and a school completed!

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

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1325 Carriage Hill Court
Ashland, Ohio 44805

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Woman's Outlook Newsletter

Calendar

In my office I use a calendar with a daily quotation from people whom I don't know. However, the quotes are usually meaningful. Since Leap Year isn't an annual happening, I saved February 29, 1992, because it was special. David Ketchum was quoted: "Two phrases — 'Will you help?' and 'Yes, I will!' — comprise the most beautiful duet in American history." I liked that.

Also on my calendar are these days:

- National Day of Prayer — May 6
- Mother's Day — May 9
- Commencement — May or June, depending on which school
- Memorial Day — May 30
- Children's Day — June 13
- Flag Day — June 14
- Father's Day — June 20

This is a family time!



And it begins with prayer. The United States is the only country which observes a day of prayer as a nation. Use this day in prayer for your self, your family, your church and missionaries, your local and state government officials, and the national leaders: President and Mrs. Clinton, senators and representatives.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

II Chronicles 7:14

With the foundation of prayer, celebrate, honor, and remember your family. Even for the deceased, enjoy and appreciate your happy memories. Take time to teach your children Christian values. That should bring you back to prayer and Bible reading, talking with and listening to God, the foundation of a Christian home.



HERE'S AN IDEA!

From the Central District, the Milledgeville Brethren Beacons ladies made "stone" soup and distributed 23 quarts of vegetable and chicken soup to area shut-ins and senior citizens. They also made door decorations for the Good Samaritan nursing home as well as sewing lap robes and doing mending.

The Priscilla Circle learned ideas of ministry from Margaret Charlton of the Good Samaritan nursing home. She also described some of the laws governing the services of the home. The Mission Emphasis Weekend was March 19-21, with the national president, Shirley Black, as the guest speaker.

CONFERENCE QUOTES FROM 1992

Do you remember who said:

1. Changes in the world's economy are the hardest things an Amish family faces today.
2. I strongly urge each church to begin a corporate prayer group.
3. Your help is needed in outfitting these two new missionary couples (Eagle and Ruggles). Thank you in advance for having a vital part in their ministries.
4. Don't think you are too old for the Lord to use.
5. Prayer is the glue that holds all the armor together.
6. When we use our gifts and abilities God has given us, look what He can do.
7. The whole question of loyalty to Jesus Christ is whether we wear His armor, when we go into battle. It is clear that Jesus Christ is the leader, and we are to follow Him. God assumes we will put on the armor before we enter into warfare. Answers are in the third column.

Mrs. Noah (continued)

dove, but she didn't return. Then God told Noah to open the door and we would leave the ark—our family and all the animals, birds, and creepy crawlers.

It was a day of thanksgiving! Noah built an altar to the Lord and offered sacrifices. God blessed us and promised He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. To seal this promise, God placed a rainbow in the sky—it was beautiful!

Well, when I married Noah, I never thought this would happen to me. I was just a plain simple woman that God used. Noah was a godly man and obedient to the Lord's voice and that's the way we taught our children. We need to preach God's Word and live lives pleasing to the Lord.

I did all I could to help Noah—tried not to complain but tried to be patient. God uses all of us to fulfill His purpose and sometimes in ways that we would never guess.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for using all of us in unique ways. Thank you, too, for giving us the rainbow to remind us of your love and care. Thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, who is our Savior.



GENERAL CONFERENCE OF BRETHREN CHURCHES

August 2-6, 1993
Ashland, Ohio

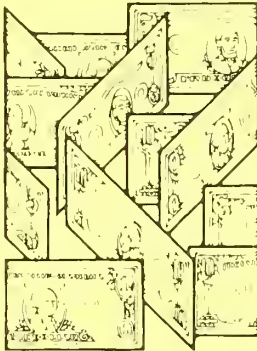
ANSWERS TO CONFERENCE QUOTES

1. Mary Borntrager, the WMS luncheon speaker
2. Marlin McCann, Moderator
3. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board
4. Mary Borntrager
5. Marlin McCann
6. Mary Borntrager
7. Dr. Leith Anderson, guest lecturer

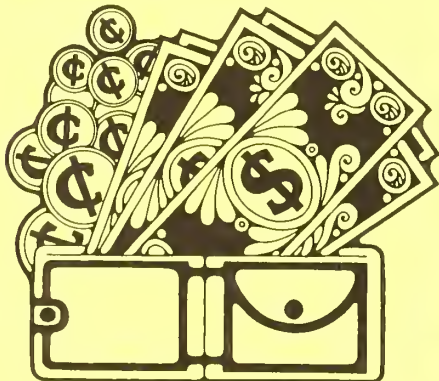
Thanks!

Michelle Geaslen received the WMS Scholarship for her senior year at Ashland University. She wrote "Sincere thanks for your special thoughtfulness. This gift has helped as I finish my last year of school. I plan to find a job in the Fashion field and minister to those I meet. Thank you in Christ, Michelle Michelle is a member of the Fremont, Ohio, Brethren Church.

The scholarship is available through your thank offerings. Others who benefit from the thank offerings are the Campus Ministry and Riverside Christian School in Lost Creek, Kentucky; these recipients are concerned about the Christian education of our youth. The offering received at the worship service sponsored by the WMS (formerly called the public service) is designated for the Seminary. The dues are used for publications, conference expenses, and other items. And the project offering is for the new orphanage in India for the girls. It is a joy to help provide and equip this home.



Always at this time in the year, someone asks "Why are we giving this offering?" There is the answer. All of these benevolences sound expensive, and they are. But we can all work together to make generous offerings. "They helped every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage" Isaiah 41:6.



District Doings

The Ohio District Conference was held at the Garber Church in Ashland in March, the day of the blizzard. Folks who came in the morning heard an inspirational message by the host pastor and district moderator, Ralph Gibson, and beautiful music by Janice Rowsey and Marty Weaver.

Many left at noon while roads were still passable. The remaining delegates participated in the auxiliary meetings. Alberta Holsinger was the district WMS president. In lieu of devotions (the lady was sensible and didn't leave home), Alberta opened the meeting with prayer.

New officers were elected:

Patti Bub (West Alexandria), president; Lois Barnhart (Gratis), vice president; DeAnn Oburn (Williamstown), secretary-treasurer; and Joanne Kroft (Garber), Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

The goals were considered and one important change was accepted. The ladies have studied the first eight chapters of Hebrews this year; next year the study will be the remaining chapters in Hebrews and Titus. The goal requests each lady to read the chapter six times a month and then to have a short study. We know that by reading a chapter several times, we absorb it. The study can be brief without detracting anything from the Word.

Alberta announced the three recipients of the Marge Scholarship at Ashland University: DeAnn Oburn, Pleasant Hill; Annalee Hoover, North Georgetown; and Laura Lucas, Ashland. The scholarship is given in memory of Margery Whitted to a young lady from the Ohio district who is enrolled at Ashland University.

The project is equipping Tim and Jan Eagle for the mission field and offerings will be received at the spring rallies in late April. Next year's project will help the Ruggles.



The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

In Ashland plans are being set for General Conference; it will be one of the best. Isn't each one?

You will be surprised to see the Myers Convocation Center, which is recently remodeled and beautiful. One worker said, "The Brethren won't know where they are!" Yes, we will and we will appreciate it.



Here I am, embarrassed again. In the last Newsletter, I misquoted JoAnn Seaman. JoAnn actually said this, "1,150 receive the Newsletter and 750 receive the Brethren Evangelist. With the two publications combined, 400 more receive the Evangelist." Please don't think JoAnn has a problem with figures, it is I. That's one reason why she is the treasurer.

Spring is slow in coming to Ashland. We eagerly await warmer weather, leafy trees, and garden produce. I think of the tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season (Psalm 1:3). And in The Daily Bread, the author described the Kofa palm that grows on the sides of a narrow gorge in the Kofa Mountains of Arizona. Botanists have studied its growth and concluded the opposite walls of the canyon reflect light and warmth to enable the palms to grow.

We may be near the River of Life or struggling on a mountainous gorge, yet we can reflect God's love. Our "fruit" can be praise for God's goodness, a shelter as a listener, a sitter for children to play, while mothers have some free time.

An interesting study is of the trees named in the Bible—the cedars of Lebanon, the oaks of righteousness, the sycamore, juniper, or balsa. Choose a strong one and be like it this summer! And remember, when there is pruning, God's purposes are being worked out.

Your friend,

Joan

Joan

Our Experiences in the Crusader Program

By Julie and Jerry Flora

FORTY YEARS AGO I served my third term as a Summer Crusader. In those days the Crusader program included only a team of four women. We were not all Brethren, but we served under the Brethren Youth organization at Ashland College. One of the Crusaders who served with me that year was Doris (King) Barnett.

Our team led and taught vacation Bible schools in Indiana churches. Not all of those churches were Brethren. In some cases a community Bible school was held for several denominations in one of the local church buildings. The Bible schools in which I worked were located in farm areas.

Approximately 100 students attended these Bible schools. I remember teaching a class of fifteen juniors. The average attendance at a VBS held at Twelve Mile, Ind., was 122, with an average of 60 at another one at

Julie (Tritch) Flora served as a Crusader in 1951, 1952, and 1953; Jerry sang with the Ambassadors in 1952 and 1955.

Julie taught third grade and music at Pasadena Christian School for a time, was a full-time pastor's wife and mother for several years, and later worked at The Carpenter's Shop (Brethren bookstore) in Ashland. At present she is an assistant librarian at Ashland Theological Seminary. She sings in the Park Street Brethren Church choir and writes articles for various periodicals.

As a student, Jerry served several years as president of National Brethren Youth. He later served two Brethren pastorates. For the past 21 years he has been a professor at Ashland Theological Seminary. He is also a writer and editor.

Jerry and Julie are co-authors of a book, *Faith and Fortitude*. They also hold seminars on spiritual growth.



Julie (c.) and Jerry (far r.) Flora, with fellow Gospel Team members (l. to r.) Glenn Grumbling, Ruth Barber, and Edna Lindsley.

Dutchtown. I remember spending time in study and preparation, although I do not remember what curriculum materials we used. My photo album shows a donkey we made for a commencement skit.

In addition to teaching Bible school, we held Sunday evening or midweek services. While the other members on my team read scripture, sang, and preached, I always played the piano. Each Bible school lasted two weeks, and we held three of them in different areas of Indiana during the summer.

My photos show us having lots of fun at the homes of the kind, hospitable people who kept us during the two weeks. I also remember the delicious food. Since much of our service took place in June, we kept a record of how many meals contained strawberries.

We enjoyed being on the farms. We played with or watched the animals and even rode horses. One time someone brought a horse to the Bible school. I also have a picture of us on a tractor. One special thrill for me was

when Elmo, a preacher's son, took us for a flight in his small, one-engine airplane.

While I was teaching vacation Bible School, Jerry was singing bass in an all-male group called the Ambassador Quartet. The other three members of the quartet were Harold Barnett, Phil Lersch, and Robert Keplinger. They visited all the Brethren churches in Indiana presenting an inspirational service that featured their singing and which included a short drama of the life of the Apostle Paul.

I was pleased when they also sang for my Grandmother Grisso's funeral at Mexico, Indiana, during that summer. This was also the time when Jerry made his initial decision to choose me to be his life partner.

Jerry sang with the Ambassadors again in 1955. That year the other members of the quarter were Marlin McCann, Ray Aspinall, and Richard Kuns. Rolf Stolpner also traveled with the group and played the piano.

This team provided revival services for a week at a time. They

served in several churches during the summer. They also taught at Riverside Christian Training School and spent a few days at Lake Shishewana helping drill a well. One of their fun times was a trip to the Ringling Brothers Circus.

Another traveling group composed of college students during those years was the Gospel Team. Christian activities at the college included a Men's Gospel Team organization as well as a Women's

Gospel Team. Members from these two groups would form a mixed team that would travel to a Brethren church to hold services for a few days.

During our first year of college (1952), Jerry and I were on one of these teams that traveled to the Waterloo, Iowa, First Brethren Church. This trip was one of the events that helped us get started on our life together. Shortly before this trip I had broken my

ankle. Therefore the guys had to carry me up and down steps. In spite of my injury, I was thankful for the opportunity to serve in this way.

God can use our lives at all ages if we are open and willing to be molded into His Divine will. A hymn that comes to my mind is:

*Give of your best to the Master,
Give of the strength of your youth;
Clad in salvation's full armor,
Join in the battle for truth.* [†]

The Crusader Program

What We Learned From Serving As Summer Crusaders

By Kathy (Stout) and Jeff Carter

AS JEFF AND I were sitting at the kitchen table one morning before our three little ones got up, we asked ourselves the question suggested by the title of this article. We came to the realization that even though we served in different parts of the United States and were on two totally different education teams, we had similar experiences and feelings about being Crusaders.

When asked the question, "How was your summer?" at Crusader Review, I remember Jeff replying over and over again, "It was GREAT!" My response was something along the lines of how much fun it was and yet how challenging it could sometimes be living with Nancy, Dave, Danny, and Rich for a whole summer.

Jeff served on the education team "Seekers" in 1981, and Kathy served on the ed. team Cornerstone in 1984. They worked several years as volunteers with Youth for Christ before becoming Senior Youth leaders five years ago at the Burlington, Indiana, First Brethren Church. Both are active on the Board of Christian Education at Burlington. Choir and W.M.S. are other areas of ministry in which Kathy is presently involved. She also plans to be a co-coordinator for the upcoming Passing On the Promise process.



Jeff and Kathy Carter with (l. to r.) Cassie, Kelly Ann, and John.

In retrospect, those answers — given by us just twelve and nine years ago — seem so trivial. As we reflect back, our responses should have included comments about a clearer commitment to the denomination, the need for evangelism, and our enthusiasm for what we could do to serve our home church.

As we visited churches in Florida, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio, we had the experience of meeting several different Brethren "personalities." Some were more serious, while others were less reserved. But all were Brethren and all supported us and participated in other denominational functions. It is always a thrill when we are able to recognize pastors and church workers from the various churches we served. We realize that the denomination is bigger than just our little congregation.

Since both Jeff and I were on education teams, canvassing and evangelism were big parts of our experiences. I can recall in one of the churches I served that the pastor took a bus into the downtown neighborhoods, and kids from all walks of life came to the church for Bible school. My class looked like a United Nations conference! The experience of going out and reaching unchurched kids for Bible school opened our eyes to the importance of evangelism.

Along with bringing back a desire to reach out beyond the boundaries of our home church, other results of the Crusader experience included getting involved in other areas of service and making a stronger commitment
(continued at bottom of next page)

Announcing the 1993 Crusader Interns, Summer Crusaders, and District Crusaders

TWENTY-TWO young people will be serving in the three branches of the Crusader Program during the summer of 1993.

CRUSADER INTERNS

Six young adults will be serving as Crusader Interns this summer:

ANDREW CRUM (Burlington, Indiana) will serve as an intern at the Muncie, Indiana, First Brethren Church.

TROY CUMMINS (Bryan, Ohio) will work as a camp staff intern at the Brethren Retreat Center in Shipshewana, Indiana.

BECKI FULMER (Park Street Brethren Church, Ashland, Ohio) will serve an internship at the Mulvane, Kansas, Brethren Church.

JACK MILLER (University Church, Ashland, Ohio) will serve as a pastoral intern at the Louisville, Ohio, First Brethren Church.

KAREN ROBINS (Tucson, Arizona, First Brethren) will serve an internship with the Nappanee, Indiana, First Brethren Church.

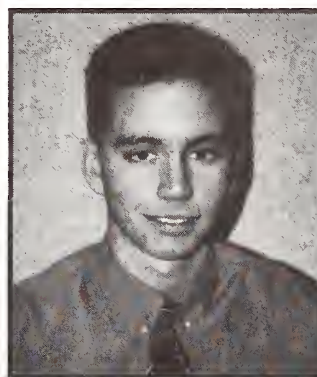
KURT STOUT (Burlington, Indiana) will serve as a pastoral intern at the North Manchester, Indiana, First Brethren Church.

What we learned

(continued from previous page)

to our church. Unlike me, Jeff did not grow up in The Brethren Church, so being a Crusader impacted his involvement and love for The Brethren Church more than it impacted mine, since my parents had always encouraged me to be involved and had set an example of active participation.

What wonderful memories we both have of our summers! The best things about Crusader memories and experiences are that we can still learn from them and that we can encourage other young people to become a part of that special group of people known as Summer Crusaders. [†]



Crusader Interns:

Above —
(seated, l. to r.)
Karen Robins,
Becki Fulmer,
(standing, l. to r.)
Andrew Crum,
Kurt Stout,
Troy Cummins.

At left —
Jack Miller.

SUMMER CRUSADERS

Two ministry teams have been chosen to serve as Summer Crusaders.

Unashamed

Stacy Oligea, a four-year veteran Crusader from the West Alexandria, Ohio, First Brethren Church, will serve as the team leader of **Unashamed** (2 Timothy 1:7-12). Dawn Kidd, another four-year veteran who is from the Bethlehem Brethren Church

in Harrisonburg, Virginia, will complete this team of two.

Unashamed will serve the North gate (Manteca) and Stockton churches in California as well as spend a week working at Camp Berea in the Northern California District. They will then travel to the Southwest District, where they will work two weeks in camp and one week in various activities (youth, senior adult ministries, etc.) within the district.



Unashamed team members Stacy Oligee (seated) and Dawn Kidd.

His Workmanship

Annalee Hoover and Sarah Hollewell will serve as co-leaders for the ministry team **His Workmanship** (Eph. 2:8-10). Annalee is a four-year veteran from the North Georgetown, Ohio, Brethren Church and a member of the Park Street



His Workmanship team members (seated, l. to r.) Sarah Hollewell, Annalee Hoover, (standing, l. to r.) Kimberly Crouch, and Wendy Barr.

Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio. Sarah is a three-year veteran from the Lanark, Illinois, First Brethren Church. Other members of the team are Wendy Barr, a second-year Crusader from the Hagerstown, Maryland, Brethren Church; and first-year member Kimberly Crouch from the New Lebanon, Ohio, Brethren Church.

His Workmanship will serve churches in the midwest and east. Their main responsibilities will be VBS, youth events, worship services, nursing homes, a week of camp, and inner city ministries.

DISTRICT CRUSADERS

Three districts are participating in the District Crusader program this summer. This is the fourth year for a district crusader team from the Pennsylvania District and the first year for both the Indiana and Ohio Districts.

Pennsylvania District Crusaders

Four young women comprise this team. Leslie John from the Cameron, West Virginia, Brethren Church is the only second-year district crusader on the team. The other three team members, all first-year crusaders, are Jaime Gillespie from the Vinco Brethren Church in Mineral Point, Pa.; Samantha Hank of the Pleasant View Brethren Church in Vandergrift, Pa.; and Mauna Sampson of the Cameron, West Virginia, Brethren Church.

Ohio District Crusaders

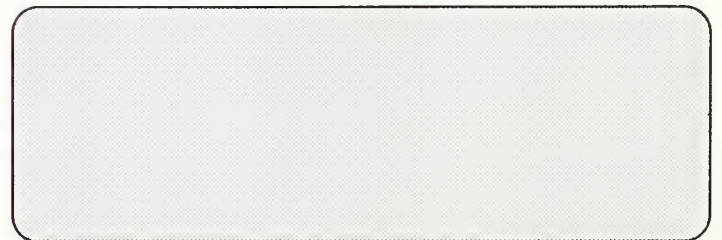
The Ohio District Crusaders will serve for two weeks at Camp Bethany working with the elementary and junior weeks of camp.

Members of this team are Kayleen Gibson (captain) from the Garber Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio; Jenny Curfman from the North Georgetown, Ohio, Brethren Church; Leola Icenhour from the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland; and Holly Curfman, also from the North Georgetown Brethren Church.

Indiana District Crusaders

Three young women will serve as the Indiana District Crusaders. They are Christy Brower of the Roann, Ind., First Brethren Church; Amber Dolby from the North Manchester, Ind., First Brethren Church; and Nichole Caughell, also from the Roann First Brethren Church.

Tentative plans are for this team to serve at camp and at a vacation Bible school. [†]



“Learning and Passing It On” is Theme Of SS Emphasis Month at Warsaw Church

Warsaw, Ind. — The First Brethren Church of Warsaw observed February as Sunday School Emphasis Month.

The theme for the month was “Learning and Passing It On.”

As part of this emphasis, the Ministry of Nurture asked Sunday school students of all ages to tell what they have learned in or about Sunday school. Their responses were then printed in the bulletin each week to encourage others to attend Sunday school and learn some valuable lessons of their own.

In keeping with their theme, the Warsaw Brethren want to pass on some of those lessons in order to encourage others to think about what they have learned . . . and then to “Pass It On.”

I've learned the memory verse John 10:14. — age 6

I've learned that sharing as a group shows the love of Jesus. — age 82

I've learned that I like stories from the Bible. — age 8

I've learned that if you have your lesson done, you learn more. — age 36

I've learned that it only takes 45 minutes a week to attend Sunday school. — age 31

I've learned my favorite Bible story about Noah and the flood. — age 8

I've learned that it's helpful to share my thoughts and feelings with others. — age 70

I've learned Psalm 23. — age 8

I've learned that Sunday school gets me into a good perspective and helps

me manage throughout the week. — age 16

I've learned that reading and studying the Bible with people from Sunday school makes it easier to understand. — age 29

I've learned that worldly things don't last forever; God's love does. — age 40

I've learned that you can have fun in Sunday school, but to also take it seriously and pay attention to get the most out of the lesson. — age 15

I've learned that verses memorized as a child have stayed with me and influenced my adult life. — age 84

I've learned about Jesus and the loaves and the fishes. — age 7

I've learned that everything has a purpose in God's great plan and it's interesting to learn how we fit into His plan. — age 40

I've learned that Sunday school is a basic part of learning about God's word. — age 14

I've learned that Christ was born in a stable and that an angel told Mary to name her baby Jesus. — age 5

I've learned that I understand God's word better through discussions in our class. — age 74

I've learned that we all have struggles in life and sharing these struggles can be comforting. — age 41

I've learned that God has provided us with a beautiful world to live in. — age 60

I've learned that we are all God's children and have the ability to love one another. — age 29

I've learned that no matter how many times you go over the scriptures, there is always something new or different to learn. — age 60

I've learned that David had a son who wanted to be king, so he tried to kill David. — age 7

I've learned the value of Christian friendship and love for others. — age 53

I've learned the great opportunity for Christian growth is in assembling ourselves together, studying God's word, and applying it to our lives with God's help. — age 69

— submitted by Karen Funkhouser,
Co-chair, Ministry of Nurture

Deacon and Deaconess Ordained At Raystown Brethren Church

Saxton, Pa. — Alfred and Bonita Chamberlain were ordained deacon and deaconess Sunday evening, March 21, at the Raystown Brethren Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain are active members and workers at the Raystown Church. Mrs. Chamberlain is W.M.S. president and an adult Sunday school teacher. Mr. Chamberlain is doing much of the remodeling work on the church building. Together they serve as leaders of the youth group and also operate a clothing ministry located on top of their garage.

In addition, Mr. Chamberlain is a licensed minister in the Pennsylvania District and hopes to be ordained in the future. He is employed by the New Enterprise Stone and Lime Company. The Chamberlains have two sons — Travis (17) and Christopher (14).

Participating in the ordination

service were Raystown Pastor Lloy Blattenberger; Rev. Bill Yoder, pastor of the Main Street Brethren Church in Meyersdale, Pa.; Rev. Bryan Karchner, pastor of the Berlin, Pa., Brethren Church and representing the Pennsylvania District Board of Oversight; Jean Weimert, Raystown deaconess; Nancy Weimert, church secretary; and Susan Weimert. The Chamberlains' two sons served as ushers. A time of fellowship followed the service.

— reported by Susan Weimert



Photo by Susan Weimert

New deacon couple Alfred and Bonita Chamberlain (kneeling) with (l. to r.) Jean Weimert, Rev. Bill Yoder, Raystown Pastor Lloy Blattenberger, and Rev. Bryan Karchner.

Hunger Fact

Over 40,000 children worldwide die each day from hunger-related causes. That number is equal to 100 jumbo jets, each loaded with 400 children, crashing to the earth, one every 14 minutes, and leaving no survivors.

— Art Simon, Bread for the World

Ohio District Conference Held March 12-13 Despite Worst Winter Storm of the Season

Ashland, Ohio — Snow was on everyone's mind at the Ohio District Conference held March 12 and 13, the weekend of the "blizzard of the decade" in eastern United States.

Fortunately, Ashland, the conference location, was not severely hit, but gusting winds and driving snow proved worrisome for the 75 delegates (47 lay, 28 ministerial) and 15 guests who braved the elements to attend the conference.

The gathering was held in the beautiful new sanctuary of the Garber Brethren Church, dedicated just a year earlier. Rev. Ralph Gibson, pastor of the church, served as moderator.

An inspirational service was held Friday evening (March 12). Seminary student Jim Garrett, who serves as youth pastor at the Garber Church, led the 40 or so people who attended in singing favorite hymns, then gave a brief devotional about "focusing on things above," based on Col. 3:12-17. Garber member Martha Weaver sang for the service.

The Saturday session opened with special music by Garber trio Janice

Rowsey, Bonnie Gibson, and Mary Weaver; and selections on the musical saw by Milo Truex. Then Moderator Gibson, using Acts 2:42-47 as his text, spoke about some of the basic tools for building the church.

During the business session that followed, delegates approved a recommendation from the District Mission Board that the (Ashland) University Church be elevated from a class to a full congregation. Action was also taken to disband the district board of trustees and to assign the board's responsibilities to the District Executive Committee (to be renamed the District Board of Directors). This action was referred to the District Rules and Organization Committee for final implementation at the 1994 district conference.

Reports were received from the treasurer and statistician and from the boards and auxiliaries of the district. Statistician Dorman Ronk noted a gain of 122 members (from 3,752 to 3,874) in the district in 1992, with a gain of 915 members in the last ten years. Average wor-

ship attendance for the 22 congregations of the district was 3,376, with six churches having a greater average worship attendance than membership (Walcrest — worship = 186% of membership; Smoky Row — 140%; Garber — 130%; Northview Brethren Life — 106%; Pleasant Hill — 104%; Newark — 102%).

Elections resulted in these officers for 1993-94: moderator-elect—Rev. Jim Koontz; secretary—Linda Geaslen, and assistant—Vanessa Gordon; treasurer—Stanley Gentle, and assistant—Jeff Whiteside; statistician—Dorman Ronk. Rev. Jim Rowsey, pastor of the Smithville Brethren Church, is the new moderator.

Following lunch, reports were presented by the various denominational ministries of The Brethren Church. Dr. Mary Ellen Drushal (academic dean) reported for Ashland Theological Seminary that 29 Brethren students currently attend the school. She also noted that five Romanians have applied for admission, but that they cannot be accepted unless finances for their support can be found.

The conference concluded with concurrent sessions of the W.M.S., Brethren Men of Mission, and Elders.

— Richard C. Winfield

Rev. Ron Williams to Receive Honorary Doctor's Degree

Shaker Heights, Ohio — Rev. Ronald Williams II, founder and pastor of the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior, has been chosen to receive an honorary doctor's degree from China Christian College of Taipei, Taiwan.

Rev. Williams began the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior congregation in December 1982 with 12 members. The congregation has since grown to approximately 1,000 members. In addition to his preaching and teaching ministry, Rev. Williams is an accomplished musician and composer. He is the director of The Voices of Koinonia, which is the concert choir of Brethren Fellowship of the Savior, and was the founder and director of the former Messengers of Peace.

A native Cleveland, Williams is a 1974 graduate of Livingston College, Salisbury, N.C. (B.A. degree in political science), and holds a Master of Divinity degree from Ashland Theological Seminary. He is married, and he and his wife, Carolyn, are the parents of two sons, Clifton and Christian.

Rev. Williams will receive the honorary degree on Sunday, May 9, during the twelve o'clock (noon) worship

service at the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior. The degree will be presented by Dr. John Wong, president of China Christian College. The speaker for the service will be Dr. Joseph R. Shultz, former president of Ashland University and Ashland Theological Seminary.

Bud Lam Honored at Mt. Olive For 50 Years as Active Member

Pineville, Va. — Hensel "Bud" Lam was honored March 21 by the Mount Olive Brethren Church for his 50 years of active membership in the congregation.

Mr. Lam was awarded a golden anniversary certificate and thanked by many in the congregation for his friendship and for the vital role he has played in bringing new people into the church.

Bud was born November 3, 1930, to Leon and Frances Lam. His mother is currently

the second oldest member of the Mount Olive congregation.

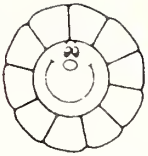
On October 15, 1950, Bud married Charlotte Life. They are the parents of two married daughters, Martha Porter and Sara Miller, both of whom are active in the church. One grandchild, Jennifer Porter, will soon be joined by a second.

Mr. Lam is preparing to retire from Merck, Inc., where he has been employed for the past 22 years. He is deeply appreciated by his pastor and church family, who wish him well in his retirement.

— reported by Pastor Fred Miller



Hensel "Bud" Lam (c.) with his wife, Charlotte and his pastor, Rev. Fred Miller.



Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).



Hi boys and girls!

Have you looked outside lately? Are there colorful flowers growing around your house or apartment? I have many different kinds of flowers growing in my yard. I love to take a walk and see how many colors I can find by just looking at my plants.

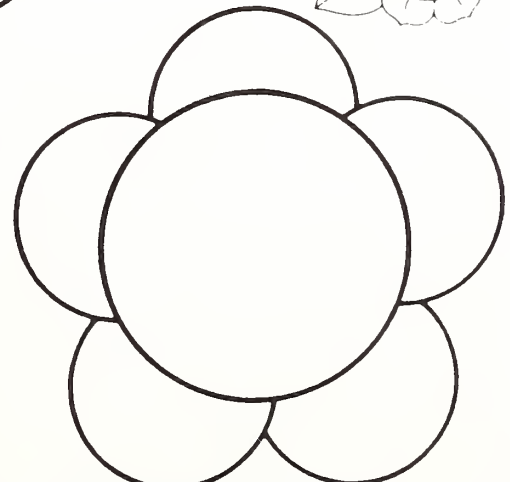
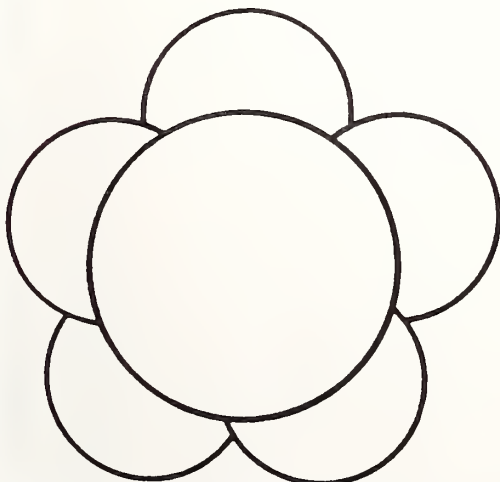
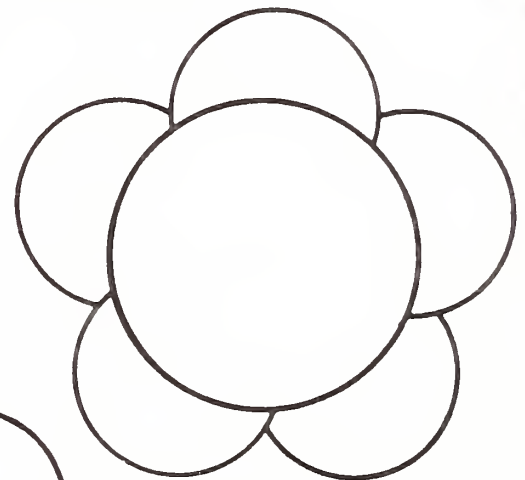
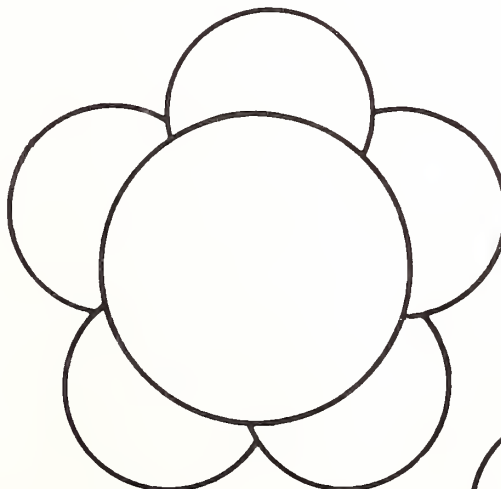
These beautiful flowers remind me of the Bible book of Matthew, chapter 6, where Jesus talks about pretty flowers. He says that we never have to worry about anything because He will always take care of us — just as He takes care of the flowers. Sometimes you might worry about not having your homework done. You might worry about not having really neat clothes like the clothes another person in your class has. Or you might worry about your mom or dad not having enough money to pay for the things you need.

Jesus says, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you" (Matthew 6:33). This means that if you love Jesus with all your heart, He will always make sure that you have the things you need. Isn't it wonderful that Jesus takes care of everything?

See you next month!

Read Matthew 6:25-34.

God provides us with many things. Write some of the things that are important to you on each flower. Then color the flowers. Remember: God always takes care of us!



Putting Prayer into Practice Is Focus Of 1993 Brethren Pastors' Conference

Branson, Mo. — Prayer was the primary focus of the 1993 Brethren Pastors' Conference held March 16–18 at the Stonecroft Conference Center; not preaching about the importance of prayer or teaching on how to pray, but actual praying.

Facilitator for the conference was Rev. Earl Pickard, national prayer director for Campus Crusade for Christ and a member of the National Prayer Committee.

"I went to the conference expecting that Rev. Pickard would lead several sessions, teaching us about prayer," said Rev. Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries. "And I expected we'd spend some time praying together, as well.

"Instead, Rev. Pickard provided only brief periods of teaching about prayer. The major part of Tuesday evening and Wednesday were spent praying. We prayed corporately, in small groups, as couples, and individually; in the pews of the chapel, at the altar, and in circles of chairs; on our knees, on our seats, and on our feet standing and walking."

Several of those present said that it

was one of the most intense times in their lives. Within five minutes of beginning the first prayer session, all attending seemed to have caught the burden for praying and became actively involved.

Prayers were specific. Prayers of worship to God and of praise to the Lord Jesus Christ were offered. Prayers of repentance from individual and corporate sins were lifted up. One evening the participants corporately surrendered The Brethren Church and its individual congregations to God.

Strained relationships were restored; pastors and spouses experiencing stress and emotional strain were surrounded with love and intercession; and physical healing was requested. Prayers were offered that Satan be bound, that cities be healed and open to the message of Christ, and that Brethren come to trust one another more fully. Denominational leaders, local churches, and hurting members of local congregations were upheld before the Lord.

"The conference was one of the most encouraging and uplifting events of my life," said Rev. Waters.

On Thursday morning, Dr. Brenda

Colijn, co-chair of the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, led the pastors and other elders in a discussion session on a biblical interpretation booklet being developed by the committee. Spouses participated in a final prayer session with Rev. Pickard.

More than 70 pastors, associates, retired pastors, other elders, and their spouses attend the conference.

Special thanks go to Rev. Reilly Smith and the other pastors of the Midwest District for planning the conference and for providing the atmosphere for God's Spirit to move among this group of church leaders.

The 1994 Pastors' Conference will be held in Indiana. Dates have not yet been established.

"Because of the positive relationship-building and spiritual renewal that take place at Pastors' Conference, I urge churches to make every effort to have their pastor and spouse attend the 1994 conference," commented Rev. Waters.

"Some practical ways to help them do so include covering the cost of registration and travel, providing child care, and intentionally blocking off that week in the church calendar so the pastor can be away from the church. The investment in time and money will be well worth the spiritual benefits to the pastoral family and to the church."

"Empowered Through Prayer" Is SW District Conference Theme

Tucson, Ariz. — "Empowered Through Prayer" was the theme of the Southwest District Conference held February 19–21 at the Tucson First Brethren Church.

The conference opened Friday evening with a worship service that featured an Ashland Theological Seminary report by Vice President Fred Finks and a message by Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church.

Business was conducted Saturday morning and early afternoon, with Moderator Chuck Wilson presiding. Reports from the treasurer, Camp Committee, and the Board of Missions were received. Pastor David West reported that Northwest Brethren Chapel has employed an architect for an addition to its church building.

Officers elected for 1993–94 were Sonny Clark—vice moderator; Debbie Wilson—secretary; Nadine Curtright—assistant secretary; Jim Fisher—treasurer. Rollie Cook, this year's vice moderator, is the new moderator.

Following the afternoon business session, three workshops were held in suc-

cession: "Worship" led by Dr. Fred Finks; "Prayer" by Pastor Dave West; and "How Brethren Understand the Bible" by Rev. Bill Kerner. The day concluded with a worship service, with Rev. Russell Gordon, the national Missionary Board's Director of Home Missions and Church Growth, giving the message.

The conference ended Sunday morn-

ing with worship services at both district churches. Rev. Gordon spoke at Northwest Brethren Chapel, and Dr. Finks spoke at the Tucson First Brethren Church.

Next year's conference will be held April 15–17 at Northwest Chapel.

— written by the editor using minutes and other reports from Dist. Sec. Maude Shingler

"Be As Living Stones" is Theme Of Florida District Conference

Sarasota, Fla. — "Be As Living Stones" was the theme of the 16th Annual Conference of the Florida District of The Brethren Church held Saturday, March 6, at the Sarasota First Brethren Church.

Mark Ray, Director of Ministries and Youth at the Sarasota Church, led choruses and presented special music to start the morning session. Then followed an inspirational message by Dr. Charles Munson, former professor and dean at Ashland Theological Seminary (retired).

National Brethren ministry reports were given by Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries; Rev. Russell Gordon, Director of Home Missions and Church Growth; and Dr. Fred

Finks, Vice President of Ashland Theological Seminary.

Rev. David Stone, pastor of the Bloomingdale Brethren Church, made a video presentation of a plan by the Missions/Outreach Ministry of the Florida District to plant clusters of churches in the west coast and central regions of Florida. The goal of the plan is to plant twenty churches by the end of the year 2,000, using teams of bi-vocational church planters.

The strategy calls for planting five churches in a metropolitan area at one time, with the churches being close enough to provide support and share resources, yet far enough apart not to be ministering to the same people. At least three individuals or couples serving as tent-makers would be needed for each church.

Rev. Stone also reported on the
(continued on next page)

From The



Grape Vine

Pastor Keith Harris of the Sergeantsville, N.J., First Brethren Church and his wife, Cindy, recently made a trip to Israel, paid for by the members and friends of the church. The Harris family thoroughly enjoyed the trip and since returning have been showing the many slides they took while in the Holy Land. "For a small country church, we here at First Brethren have much to be thankful for," writes Mrs. Lawrence Emmons, secretary for the congregation. "Our church is slowly growing as many new families have moved into the area. The word of God is preached from the pulpit . . . and many have been saved through our pastor's ministry." Pastor Harris

Florida District Conference

(continued from previous page)

progress of Passing On the Promise in the Florida District. He said that most of the district churches have decided to participate in the POTP process.

Florida District Coordinator Paul Isaacson presided over the afternoon business session, which opened with choruses led by Rev. Daniel Rosales, pastor of Iglesia Hispana de los Hermanos. Business included reports from the treasurer, the district ministries, and the district Ashland University Trustee Board member. Election of officers was also held, with Eugene Robbins elected as coordinator elect; Mary Ellen Swope as secretary; and Martha Stone as treasurer. Rev. Buck Garrett, this year's coordinator elect, becomes the new coordinator.

Following the business session workshops were presented by Rev. David Cooksey ("Churches in Balance") and Rev. Russell Gordon ("Church Growth"). The conference concluded with devotions and benediction by Rev. Buck Garrett, the new district coordinator.

The Florida District has six churches which had a combined membership at the end of 1992 of 308. Average worship attendance in 1992 was 359. Seventeen members were added and 88 lost in 1992 for a net loss of 71.

— written by the editor using minutes from dist. sec. Mary Ellen Swope and other reports

MAY 1993

has served the congregation since September 1, 1985.

Roxie Stahl, a member of the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church, received the Editor's Choice Award recently from the National Library of Poetry, Owings Mills, Maryland, for outstanding achievement in poetry. Mrs. Stahl's poem is being published this spring in the 1993 anthology, *Where Dreams Begin*.

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLear-TV), a group of more than 1,000 Christian leaders from nearly 100 denominations, has called for a one-year boycott of products made by S.C. Johnson and Sons, Inc., a Racine, Wis., based corporation that markets a variety of waxes/polishes and household/personal products such as *Agree* shampoo, *Edge* shaving cream, *Drano* drain opener, *Glade* room deodorizer, *Windex* glass cleaner, and *Johnson Wax*.

According to CLear-TV, S.C. Johnson and Sons, Inc., has been a leading sponsor of sex, violence, and profanity in prime-time television programming for more than two years. CLear-TV has repeatedly asked the company to reduce the amount of sex, violence, and profanity it sponsors on television, but the company has refused to do so.

In Memory

Marjorie M. Sommers, 57, April 20. Member of the Loree First Brethren Church, where she was choir director at the time of her death, president of the Seekers Class, and a member of the Charity W.M.S. group. Services by Pastor James Thomas and Rev. Claude Stogsdill.

Mary Durbin, 74, April 9. Member and deaconess for many years at the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Martha Yeager, 83, April 6. Member for 74 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church, where she served as deaconess, Sunday school teacher, and choir member. She also held the office of president and all other offices of W.M.S. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Florence L. Harris, 102, March 27. Member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Woodrow Immel.

Florence B. Miller, 79, March 27. Member for 64 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church, where she faithfully attended Sunday school and W.M.S. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Violet Thomas, 79, March 27. Longtime member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Noah Yoder, 67, March 24. Member for 38 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Gladys Yoder, 82, March 19. Member for more than 50 years of the Falls City First Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher and was an active member of the W.M.S. until her death. She held many offices in the

In Memoriam of Ellen Kiefer

When we meet as W.M.S. members
There will be a vacant chair
But we hear in memory — her voice
And we know that she is there.

Words cannot express our thoughts of Ellen, who was a very lovable member. She did her share in all activities with much thoughtfulness, always knowing the right thing to do. The W.M.S. members will miss her in our local group, the district, and our national W.M.S.

Ellen filled her life and other lives with laughter and cheer. She was a leader, a teacher, and a helper. Yes, we will miss her, but . . .

We know she met her Savior with
her ready cheery smile,
As He reached to help her as she
walked the last long mile.
An oh, the joy in heaven as Ellen
took her place,
And oh, the joy for Ellen as she
finished her last race!

— By Princess Frush

This tribute to Ellen Kiefer was read by Princess Frush at the W.M.S. Public Service on March 27 at the Warsaw, Ind., First Brethren Church. Ellen Kiefer died March 18, 1993. Her death notice was included in last month's EVANGELIST.

church and in W.M.S. Services by Pastor William Shipman.

Harry Leidy, 89, March 17. Longtime member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb.

Anna Marie Myer, 92, March 11. Member of the Flora First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Alvin Grumbling.

Mary Gray, 61, February 12. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Tomb. The Windber Hospice had a special program in March on WJAC TV (Johnstown, Pa.) in Mary Gray's memory to honor her courage and her Christian faith and witness.

Mrs. Frances Acker, 87, February 9. Member since 1920 of the Oakville First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

Goldenaires

Mr. and Mrs. Ross Connor, 73rd*, April 21. Members (Mr. Connor a charter member) of the Johnstown Third Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Ardmore: 2 by baptism

Pleasant View: 2 by baptism

North Manchester: 4 by transfer

Meadow Crest: 5 by baptism, 4 by affirmation of faith, 3 by transfer

**Normally only 50th and 5th-year anniversaries after the 50th are printed (i.e., 50th 55th, 60th, etc.). But because of this rare accomplishment (73!), an exception was made.*

— The Editor

Crusader friends . . .



are friends forever

Friendships developed in the Crusader Program are strong!

Crusaders participate in a variety of experiences together — visiting Brethren churches and camps, teaching VBS, leading worship, meeting people, and growing in their relationship with the Lord and with each other! These friendships last a lifetime!

Do you know Brethren young people who would be good candidates to experience Christian service? They will gain new friendships and grow in their relationship with the greatest Friend of all through the Crusader Program!

We challenge you to seek out these young people and to encourage them to prayerfully consider the Crusader Program. And pray for these young people and for others across the country who could benefit from serving as a Crusader Intern, Summer Crusader, or District Crusader in 1994.

And to help during the summer of 1993 and in the future, please consider sending a contribution this month — Crusader month. Every gift will help give a Brethren young person the opportunity to experience Christian ministry first hand!

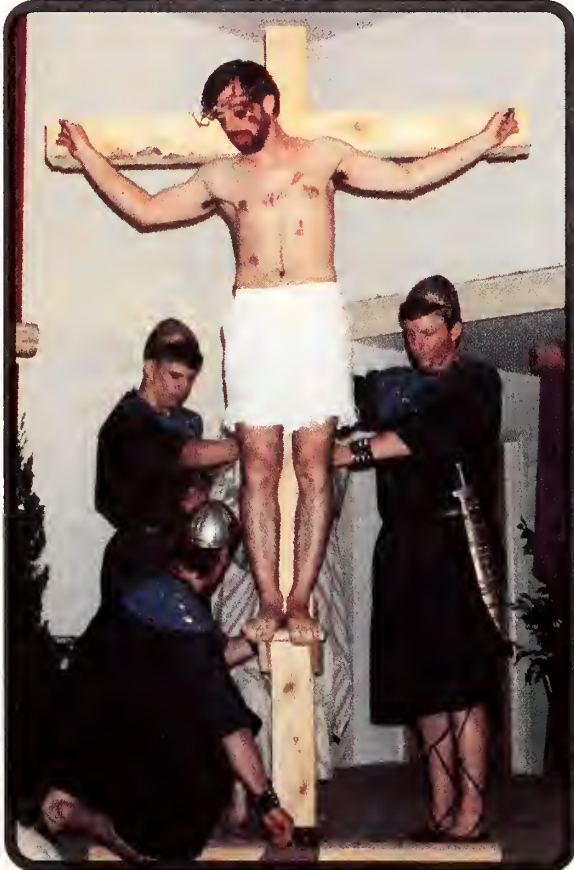
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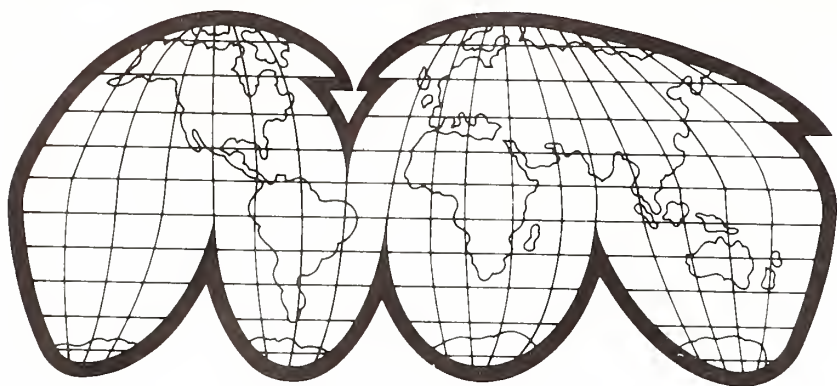
JUNE 1993



Scenes from "Sacrifice of Glory," presented at
the Mt. Olive Brethren Church

See page 15

Developing a Global Vision



by
**John
Maust**

Our Worst Enemy

SARA BEGAN attending church services with a friend and co-worker in Miami, Florida. During the preaching, Sara sat as if transfixed, absorbing every word. She also visited a couple of the church's home Bible-study groups. And she read from Genesis through the Gospels in less than a month.

Then, just when it seemed that Sara was on the verge of making a personal profession of faith, a man whom she greatly respected advised her against attending the evangelical meetings. Sara abruptly broke off her contact with the church.

A story with a happier ending

Here's a similar story but with a different ending. A Peruvian woman told me that she spent 22 years in ritualistic religion before reaching a point of deep spiritual emptiness. Someone told her about a thriving evangelical church, and she decided to attend.

While taking a cab to the church, the woman told the driver, "I feel a little guilty that I'm going to an evangelical church." To her surprise, the cab driver turned and smiled. "I'm a Mormon. It would be no problem at all for me to take you right now to *my* church."

The woman considered his suggestion, but went on to the evangelical church. There she found a saving relationship with Christ.

I believe these two stories have something in common: the work of Satan, the Christian's Public Enemy Number One, alias Lucifer, fallen angel, devil, prince of this world.

In the first instance, Satan won — although only temporarily, I believe. In the second, he tried hard but lost miserably.

To be sure, we can fall into the error of giving Satan more credit than he is due — blaming every car problem, runny nose, and mis-spoken word on the devil. But on the other hand, we cannot afford to ignore that Satan *does* try to hinder, if not negate, a Christian's effective ministry. Satan will always fight hard to keep people from getting into the kingdom.

"Be self-controlled and alert," the Apostle Peter wrote. "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8, *NIV*).

Anyone actively doing missionary work and evangelism will tell you about the need to confront and conquer Satan's disgusting schemes. While this is no treatise on spiritual warfare, here are some principles we need to practice.

Principles for facing Satan

First, we must pray — both for the person doing the witnessing and for the person or persons being evangelized. Andrew Bonar, a noted man of prayer, is quoted as saying that Satan "does not openly attack; he diverts.

"The one concern of Satan is to keep the saints from prayer. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks our wisdom and trembles when we pray."

This being the case, it should come as no surprise that one of our biggest struggles as Christians is buckling down and giving serious time to prayer and intercession.

Second, we must nurture friends to whom we are witnessing, and we need to disciple new converts. It's rather irresponsible to think that we can preach or witness once to a person and then merely leave the results to God. It is a foregone conclusion that Satan will try to detour the inquirers and confuse the baby Christians. As Christ's Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:13-20) reveals, Satan is like a pesky bird stealing away the seed scattered on the soil, and he will try to snatch the word planted in hearts.

Third, we must expect Satan-provoked obstacles. Have you ever noticed how often missionary (and pastors') families are hit by unexpected financial bills, illnesses, and other distracting problems? A Bible translator working among a resistant tribe in the Amazon Basin said that every one of his translation helpers lost at least one family member by death during the translation project. None of the Indian Christians saw this as mere coincidence.

Trials make us stronger

Ironically, while Satan thinks these obstacles will cause us to cave in, God's word says just the opposite — that the trials will serve to make us stronger, more mature Christians (James 1:2-4).

Fourth, we must realize that not everyone will accept the Good News of Christ as Savior or become an effective believer. That is just a sad fact of this fallen world. Christ's Parable of the Sower describes the varying response rate.

We want to hit 100 percent. So we invest all our time and hope in one person, and if that person doesn't become a Christian or doesn't mature as we would like, we get discouraged and want to give up. But to reap a lot, we've got to sow a lot.

Well, that's all the free publicity I want to give Satan. He is a defeated foe, you know. So the next time he comes barging in, remember James 4:7 — "Submit yourselves, then to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (*NIV*). [†]

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Cover: Photographs of scenes from "Sacrifice of Glory," a musical drama presented on Palm Sunday this year at the Mt. Olive Brethren Church in Pineville, Virginia. The photographs were taken by Barbara Roderick. See page 15 for more details.

Photo identifications:

Top photo, *The Last Supper* — Clockwise from top center: Mt. Olive pastor Rev. Fred Miller (in the role of Jesus), Ralph Kiser, Daniel Raynes, David Fitzsimons, Nathan Good, Eddie Ettinger, Reggie Smith, Roland McDonald, David Huffman, Leon Shank, David Armstrong, Tom Hinkle, and Whit Kemper.

Bottom left, *The Crucifixion* — Clockwise from the cross: Rev. Fred Miller, David Gochenour, Les Shifflett, and Scott Kyger.

Bottom right, *Resurrection Appearance* — Rev. Fred Miller and Kathy Good.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

Thoughts on love: 1. Love; 2. everyone; 3. commandments.

Unscrambled letters: 1. Jesus; 2. love; 3. commandment; 4. neighbor; 5. friends.



Street Children: Trash or Precious Souls?

By Doug Nichols

IF 40,000 SPOTTED OWLS were dying every day, there would be an outrage. But 40,000 children are dying, and it's hardly noticed," said one representative to the Convention of the Rights of the Child at the United Nations in 1991.

Not mere numbers

One hundred million extremely underprivileged and street children struggle for existence in today's cities. Does this estimate bother you? Would it if your child or grandchild were among them? Each of these children is not a mere number; each is a living child, loved by God. 100 million!

Are these children trash? Local businessmen in Brazil call them "Vermin. Garbage. If we let them grow up, they will be criminals, a blight on our society." Therefore,

Mr. Nichols is international director of Action International Ministries, a mission agency with work in Colombia, Mexico, India, Brazil, and the Philippines. Ministry to street children and the extreme poor is an important part of the work of this mission.

some policemen (and others) "moonlight" by contracting to kill them. In 1991 an average of 300 of these children were killed monthly in Brazil. In 1992 this number rose to 400 killed each month. About 400 were killed in the city of Recife, Brazil, alone, in one year.

Some of these children are young and cute. They can still smile. But most are older, have rotten teeth, and are scar-faced, disease-ridden, flea-and-lice-infested, shifty-eyed, suspicious, and fearful. They are the poor, the outcast, the abandoned, the exploited, the children of the streets.

How do they exist?

How do they exist on the streets? By begging, stealing, selling their bodies, and eating out of garbage cans. The government of the Philippines estimates that there are up to 15,000 child prostitutes between the ages of 9 and 12 in Manila's infamous flesh trade, and over fifty percent of them are boys. This is in the city of Manila alone — not the entire nation! In Thailand there are 800,000 prostitutes from 12 to 16 years old.

This type of child seems to be bypassed continually by all efforts — relief, evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. These children are expensive to work with, lack the appeal needed for a sponsorship-type program, and certainly do not make good church members.

God calls the church to reach these needy children

The word of God clearly teaches that we, the church, should reach everyone with the gospel, whether poor or rich, of whatever race or level of society, regardless of ethnic background or age, old or young! Paul said to the church at Colosse: "... Christ in you, the hope of glory. . . . We proclaim Him, admonishing every man [which includes street children] and teaching every man [the ten-year-old child prostitute of Manila, Bangkok, or Bogotá] with all wisdom, that we may present every man [all street and underprivileged children] complete in Christ" (Col. 1:27b-28, NASB). *Should not this be the purpose of each local church and of every Christian?*

Of course, not every child (or

"If 100 Boeing 747 planes carrying 400 people each crashed every day, the governments of the world would take action, but an equal number of deaths occur daily amongst children throughout the world but there is little comment!"

adult) will accept the gospel message. But it is our responsibility and privilege to declare the Good News to all. Usually, without care for physical needs, there can be no opportunity for street children. They are starving for bread — physical and spiritual.

Paul continues: "And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me" (Col. 1:29, NASB).

Everyone's help is needed

What if every evangelical organization, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, would make bold plans to "labor in God's power" to reach the millions of underprivileged street children? How wonderful this would be! The need is so great that all major evangelical denominations and all evangelical missions need to help.

Each church, denomination, and mission should begin to target underprivileged and street children for major ministry. Missions (and churches) could challenge missionaries in their ranks — the young and the old, the inexperienced and the more experienced — to devote a large portion of their ministry to long-range involvement in evangelism and discipleship of street children, especially children ages 6 to 19.

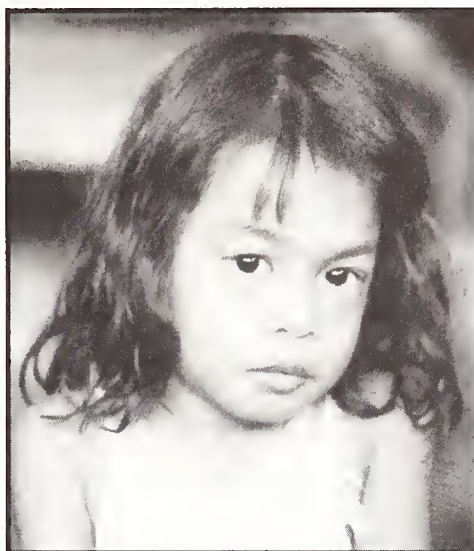
We should not, however, relegate this herculean ministry to individual Christians and missionaries who have a "natural affinity" for children. Let church and mission leaders aggressively "pray and plan" as a team and not shove it off on a few "children's workers."

We should devote a large portion of leadership, strategy, planning, and prayer to reaching the following:

- the 1,900,000 underprivileged and street children of Mexico City, including 240,000 who are abandoned
- the 14 million underprivileged

children under the age of five who die each year from infection and malnutrition

- the 50,000 to 70,000 children on the streets of Manila



- the 15,000 child prostitutes of Manila
- the 5,000 to 8,000 street children of Bogotá, Colombia
- the 7 million children worldwide who are refugees of famine and war
- the 150 million underprivileged children who are working in "slave-type" labor in extremely unsafe and unhealthy conditions
- the 12 million homeless children fighting to survive on the streets of Brazil
- the 50 percent of Mexico City's over 20 million who are under the age of 14
- the estimated 800,000 girls, ages 12 to 16, involved in prostitution in Thailand
- the 100,000 children in slave-type work throughout India between 3½ and 15 years of age
- the estimated 500,000 teen-age prostitutes in Brazil
- the 40,000 children under the age of 5 who die daily in the developing countries.

At the Convention on the Rights of the Child convened in 1991 at the United Nations, one repre-

sentative observed, "If 100 Boeing 747 planes carrying 400 people each crashed every day, the governments of the world would take action, but an equal number of deaths occur daily amongst children throughout the world but there is little comment!"

Evangelism of street children is important

PULSE magazine carried an interview with Mr. Don Miller of Compassion International entitled, "Children — One of the World's Most Forgotten Peoples?" It began by insisting that despite all the current missions emphasis on peoples, one of the world's most significant groups — children — has been neglected.

Why is child evangelism "among the smaller half of the world" so important? Mr. Miller gave four basic reasons:

First: **Scriptural.** God said of the Ten Commandments, "Impress them on your children" (cf. Deut. 6:7). Ministry to children is central to the Ten Commandments.

Second: **Statistical.** Child evangelism is important because the bulk of the world's population is children.

Third: **Sociological.** Children play important roles in society, positively as well as negatively. World Vision estimates that there are at least 40 million children on the streets of Latin America. The majority of them are becoming a plague to society and must be reached with the gospel.

Fourth: **Strategic.** That is, by reaching children, we can reach the whole society. Mr. Miller added something especially important for all in ministry to remember: "... but the point is, *by reaching children, you can reach the whole society.* Now that's a fact to be aware of, but the reason I lay it down is because I think we ought to minister to children because

“What if every evangelical organization, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, would make bold plans to “labor in God’s power” to reach the millions of underprivileged street children? How wonderful this would be!”

they are worthy of ministry, rather than to look at children as a vehicle to get to somebody else. That’s a little manipulative. What I like to think is that we can do both in a single ministry. *We can minister to children because they are worthy of ministry,* and a natural fallout that we will rejoice in is that they will have an influence in the rest of their society.”

Effective ways to reach street children

Yes, children are worthy of ministry. Let’s reach them with the Good News of Christ. The gospel is for these children of the streets, children whom the world calls “nobodies, rats, the scum of society.” Following are a few suggestions of proven, effective ways:

1. **Street evangelism**, especially in the late evenings and throughout the night, is an excellent way to reach children on the streets. Each major city such as São Paulo, Manila, Bogotá, Calcutta, and Mexico City should have teams working out of vans throughout the city, ministering the gospel and loving care to children.

2. Hold evangelistic **camps** for underprivileged and street children in cooperation with local evangelical churches. Train church members to be counselors and to assist with the follow up of street children in their area.

3. Open rescue and **discipleship homes** especially for older street children who have trusted Christ and who want to change.

4. Care for the younger children until their parents can be found, or they are placed in foster homes or adopted. Each major city should have several **temporary homes**, especially for younger children who have been abandoned or simply lost.

5. Establish **discipleship and vocational training centers** for older children, 15 and above, who

have trusted Christ. These should be live-in centers in which adolescents will be disciplined and taught reading, math, writing, and voca-



tional skills such as welding, carpentry, mechanics, and sewing. Then find jobs and a local church for them.

The church can do it!

The church must trust the Lord for **many more missionaries** to devote **long-term ministry** to the neglected millions of children of the street, to work with church-planting teams among the masses of the poor. The goal of our Savior is for all to know Him. “The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that **all should come to repentance**” (2 Pet. 3:9, *KJV*, emphasis added.). Let’s not reach just a few children; let’s reach all of them! Where are God’s people who will take up the gauntlet in this way with the challenge, “Our plans should be so big that if they fail, only we get the blame, but if they succeed, only God gets the glory.” *Let’s reach the 100 million street children of the world for God’s glory!* [†]

What Can You do for Street Children?

1. Pray for them. Pray specifically that God will raise up Christian workers around the world who will minister to the physical and spiritual needs of these abandoned and outcast children.

2. Support Brethren missions both financially and by your prayers. In addition to the general attempts by Brethren missionaries to reach out to all segments of society, two kindergartens in Malaysia, orphanages for both boys and girls in India, and a typewriting school in India are programs aimed specifically at children. The greater our support, the more Brethren missionaries are able to accomplish.

3. If you are a W.M.S. member, give generously to your National Project, which is for the girls’ orphanage in India.

4. Provide support for a child overseas on a monthly basis. The Missionary Board has a program through which you can support a child in one of the orphanages in India for \$21 per month. Compassion International and World Vision are other Christian agencies through which you can provide monthly support for a specific child.

5. Consider whether God is calling you to minister to street children in one of the nations of the world, either on a short-term or on a longer-term basis.



How to be Angry Without Sinning

By Patricia K. Peres

STANDING AUTHORITATIVELY behind his pulpit, the pastor told us, "The only way to 'be angry and sin not' is never to become angry at all." He paused for emphasis and continued, "Being angry is a sin in itself."

His statements made me begin to wonder. If Paul wanted us to know that we should never become angry at all, why didn't he say so straight out? Why did he beat around the bush in Ephesians 4:26-27 if he really meant that all anger is forbidden?

What does the New Testament say?

With these questions in mind, I began to study all the verses in the New Testament that mention anger. The first thing I discovered is that Paul *does* tell us never to become angry. In fact, Paul not only says that we should put away anger, but also that anger should never be found in God's people (Ephesians 4:31, Colossians 3:8, 2 Corinthians 12:20). If we look only at these Scriptures, it is easy to see why many Christians try to suppress anger completely.

But there are also verses that

seem to look at anger from a different perspective. For instance, Mark records an instance when Jesus was angry. Mark 3:5 says, "He looked around at them in anger . . ." (NIV). Since we know that Jesus never sinned, this proves that anger is not a sin. The question is, how can Paul's statements be reconciled with Jesus' example?

The key is found in the fact that all of the purely negative statements about anger use the Greek word *thumos*, which refers to only one type of anger: the impulsive, turbulent, temper tantrum. When I learned this, I was surprised. I had always thought that my door-slammings, shouting fits of temper weren't too bad because they were soon over. Instead, *thumos* is the only anger totally condemned as a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:20).

Jesus' anger in Mark is *orgē*, a more settled, deliberate anger than *thumos*. It is *orgē* of which Paul is speaking in Ephesians 4:26 when he instructs us to "be angry and sin not." While "be angry" is not imperative — that is, it does not *command* us to get steamed up — it is certainly permissive. Paul's moderate attitude toward *orgē* is seconded by James, when he advises Jewish Christians to be "slow to wrath [*orgē*]" (James 1:19), rather than counseling them never to become wrathful at all. We can conclude, then, that a settled, deliberate anger is acceptable to God when kept within certain limits.

What are the limits?

Both Paul and James go on to inform us what these limits are. Paul's complete statement in Ephe-

sians 4:26, 27, says, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil" (KJV). This sentence not only lays down the basic principle that it is not necessarily wrong to be angry; it also points out the two most likely possibilities for sinning when angry: harboring a grudge and giving the devil a stage on which to act.

When considering these two problem areas in more detail, I noticed that the "wrath" on which we aren't supposed to let the sun go down is a translation for yet another Greek word, which means "the provocation of anger." In other words, Paul is advising us not to allow ourselves to continue to be "provoked" — irritated, exasperated, or bitter.

To whom will you "give place"?

In addition to being wrong in itself, this vengeful spirit could deceive a Christian into permitting the devil to maneuver freely in his life. Possible results of such satanic action can be found later in this passage (Ephesians 4:31) and in Colossians 3:8. In these similar verses, Paul forbids even *orgē* if it is accompanied by bitterness, quarreling, slander, malice, filthy language, or any other evil. On the other hand, if a Christian will refuse to "give place to the devil" and instead will "give place unto [God's] wrath," he will, sooner or later, see justice carried out in the situation (Romans 12:19).

James gives us his limitations on anger in James 1:19, 20, where he tells us to be "slow to wrath: for the wrath of man works not the righteousness of God." A quick-

Mrs. Peres is a free-lance writer and a pastor's wife. She lives in Duluth, Minnesota.

tempered person might be helped by learning that James chose a word for "slow" that means *mental* slowness. Maybe Gomer Pyle, the TV character, was being scriptural when he was too dumb to know that his sergeant was insulting him!

James also tells us that we might as well be slow to anger, since anger doesn't result in any positive good anyway. Human wrath does not achieve the righteousness of God. So even though James doesn't condemn anger, neither does he endorse it as a practical way to overcome evil or injustice.

What can we conclude?

In sum, then, we have seen that anger is acceptable to God only if: (1) it is settled and deliberate, not a temper tantrum; (2) it is slow to arise and quick to subside; and (3) it doesn't lead into such sins as quarreling, slander, filthy language, or malice.

With so many limitations placed on anger, it is a tricky task to express it correctly. Matthew 18:15 tells us that if a brother sins against us (giving us cause for anger), we are to go to that person

"James also tells us that we might as well be slow to anger, since anger doesn't result in any positive good anyway. Human wrath does not achieve the righteousness of God."

and "tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Considering the prohibitions examined above, we seem to be left with only one legitimate method of doing this: a simple statement of what is wrong.

We can see this principle at work

in Jesus' experience at the cleansing of the temple. When he gave verbal expression to his anger, he simply said, "Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise" (John 2:16, *KJV*). He didn't quarrel, he didn't call people names or swear, and certainly he felt no malice toward the individuals themselves.

In the Sermon on the Mount, the subject is approached from the other side. In Matthew 5:22-25 we are told that whoever is angry with his brother is in danger of being judged. Therefore, if our brother has anything against us, we should be reconciled to him, rescuing him from this danger.

Thus these two Scriptures have us thoroughly boxed in. Whether I am the one who is angry or the one with whom someone else is angry, I am the one who is supposed to take the initiative in order to bring about reconciliation.

What if he will not hear me?

This reconciliation, this gaining of my brother, is the expressed purpose of both passages. But what if "he will not hear" me, as Matthew 18:16 says? If *he* is the one who is angry, then the situation is covered by Matthew 5, which gives no further instructions. I have done what I could: the break in fellowship is on his side.

But if *I* am the one who is still angry, Matthew 18 gives me two options. Either I can call in two or three brothers to help us find an understanding (v. 16), or I can bring peace by forgiving the wrong done me (vv. 21-35). Colossians 3:13 counsels this last option: "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any . . . have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (*KJV*).

The biggest stumbling block in the way of either choice is pride. Proverbs 13:10 tells us, "Pride only

breeds quarrels . . ." (*NIV*), and it is this pride that keeps us from going to another person to work out a peaceful solution or from simply dropping the matter by allowing

"Whether I am the one who is angry or the one with whom someone else is angry, I am the one who is supposed to take the initiative in order to bring about reconciliation."

ourselves to be wronged. Nevertheless, I must follow one of these two options — humbling though they may be — if I am to please God.

What about non-Christians?

But how should a Christian react if he is angry with a non-Christian? Do the principles we have been considering still apply?

Looking again at the instructions in Ephesians 4 and James 1, which give us the limitations on acceptable anger, it is easy to see that they are clearly intended for *any* instance of anger in a Christian. But since both passages in Matthew concerning reconciliation speak specifically about problems between "brothers" (fellow Christians), they probably should not be used in cases concerning unbelievers unless the Holy Spirit directs that way in a particular situation.

Of course, the Holy Spirit's help is also essential in any instance of anger, in order to enable us to keep from sinning. The Scriptures mentioned in this article inform us how to avoid sinful anger, but it is only by the aid of the Holy Spirit that we will be able to live up to these instructions. Then, as difficult as it may be, we Christians will find it possible to be angry without sinning. [†]

Are You Caught in a Trap?

By Carl W. Yoder, Jr.

Then they will come to their senses and escape from Satan's trap of slavery to sin which he uses to catch them whenever he likes, and then they can begin doing the will of God.

2 Timothy 2:26, TLB

ONE of the most difficult animals to catch is the ring-tailed monkey in Africa. These monkeys are extremely sly and very agile. Members of the Zulu tribe, however, have no real difficulty catching them. There secret is that they use the monkeys' natural greed against them.

The Zulus don't use steel or wooden traps, for the monkeys are much too cautious to go near them. Their trap is nothing more than a melon, the monkeys' favorite food. What the monkeys enjoy most about these melons are their delicious seeds.

The Zulus find a melon that is firmly attached to its strong vine. They cut a hole in the melon just big enough for the monkey to insert its hand. The monkey reaches in and grabs a handful of seeds. But it can't remove its hand because the hole isn't large enough to allow the clenched fist to come out.

Trapped by its own greed

Well, all the monkey has to do is open its hand and drop the seeds, right? Right, but the monkey won't do this because it wants the seeds. As much as it pulls and yells to get free, it won't open its hand and let go of the seeds. The Zulus come and catch the monkey by simply cutting it free from the melon.

Now you might say, "That's pretty stupid of the monkey." Yes, it is. But there are many people, believers and non-believers alike, who are holding on to things of this world that they don't want to let go of. Satan has

them trapped, and they have lost their freedom. Satan knows exactly what things of the world we want to hold on to, and he places them at our disposal and keeps tempting us with them, hoping we will latch on to them and won't let go.

A crucial warning

John warns us in his first epistle, "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15, NASB). When John tells us not to love the world, he's not referring to the natural world, but to the world's system.

What is the world's system? John explains in the next verse. He says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world." It's these things from Satan that people don't want to let go of in order to become free through Christ.

The "lust of the flesh" is sensuality. It is the "If it feels good, do it" mentality. Many fall for this trap and are enslaved to drugs, alcohol, and all kinds of sexual perversion.

The "lust of the eyes" is materialism. Let's face it, we live in a very materialistic society. Many people need to surround themselves with things or possessions in order to find fulfillment in their lives. The problem with possessions is that their novelty soon wears off, and people need more and better things to make them happy.

The "boastful pride of life" is often the result of a person's wealth and prestige, making that person independent of others — and of God in particular. Such people have a tendency to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think. They have their own plans and don't need anyone, especially God, trying to change those plans.

Are you caught in a trap? Is there something of the world that you are

afraid to let go of? As a Christian, have you told Jesus, "Here is my life; take it all, except this one thing; I'll handle this"? Is Jesus Lord of all your life, or of just a part?

Unlike the trapped monkey, which will be well-cared for by a host of people, who will feed it and allow it to roam, those caught in Satan's traps are in bondage to him. And he doesn't care at all about you.

Satan is out to keep people blinded to the truth of God's word. What is that truth? (1) That *all* have sinned (Rom. 3:23); (2) that the wages of sin is *death* (Rom. 6:23); (3) that after death comes the *judgment* (Heb. 9:27); (4) that the *free gift* of God is *eternal life* in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

Let go of the world

To the unbeliever I say that you can be set free forever from the bondage of sin and from Satan's trap by simply letting go of the world and by receiving what God says. Then commit your total life to Him. When you come to know Jesus, you'll come to know the Truth, "and the truth will set you free" (Jn. 8:32).

As believers, we can also remain free of the traps that Satan keeps setting for us. Paul says, "It was for **freedom** that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1, NASB, emphasis added).

To stand firm we have to quit "monkeying" around with anything that will keep us from giving our whole selves to Christ. The reason many Christians begin to doubt their salvation is that they are trying to serve "God and mammon." They still latch on to worldly things once in awhile, then they feel guilty.

What is there that you don't want to let go of that is keeping you from becoming all that God desires you to be? Let go and let God have it! Resist Satan and he will flee from you! [†]

Rev. Yoder is pastor of the Valley Brethren Church, Jones Mills, Pa. This article first appeared in the Valley Church newsletter and is used here with Rev. Yoder's permission.

Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

Violence in the Name of Religion

IN PAST WEEKS, along with reports of the stand off in Waco, Texas,* and the arrests of suspects in connection with the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York, came the disturbing news of the murder of a Florida abortion doctor by an anti-abortion activist.

I expected an outright condemnation of this homicide — yet one more act of violence in the name of religion — but was very distressed instead by the reaction of the national director of Rescue America, Don Treshman, who quipped, and I quote, "While Gunn's death is unfortunate, it's also true that quite a number of babies lives will be saved" — a declaration that came dangerously close to a justification.

To top it all, the perpetrator of the crime repeatedly asked for his Bible, thus further linking his actions to religious beliefs. It was one more case illustrating how dangerous religion, including Christianity, can be when it is used to condone, justify, or even encourage violence.

A false Messiah

It is not hard to condemn the shootings in Waco, Texas, and to see the violence perpetrated there as a consequence of a distorted view of Christianity by a leader who claims to be the Messiah. We have been told by the Scriptures to both expect and to be wary of such "false prophets," who would come as wolves disguised as sheep. So it is no surprise, unfortunately, to see such a group involved in violent actions.

When it comes to the bombing of the World Trade Center, people were quick to blame the Islamic religion, since — due to ignorance and prejudice — they equate "Moslem fundamentalism" with terrorism and violence. While it is true that the concept of

holy war is part of the Koran, it is not its central teaching. So it is a reductionist and unfair view to focus only on that aspect of Islam. Nevertheless, some acts of violence are justified and even praised in the Islamic religion, which makes the connection between this religion and violent actions plausible (though no less condemnable).

But in the case of the murder of Dr. Gunn, I am afraid that instead of condemning the crime that was committed, some, like the head of the Rescue America group, are inclined to excuse or minimize the wrong of this shooting because "It was for the right cause," or worse, because "It was only just, since he [Gunn] had killed so many." To do so, of course, is both hypocritical and ironic for a group that defends the sanctity of human life. It is also tragic, because it discredits the pro-life position, distorts the message of the gospel, and gives a bad name to Christianity.

In the eyes of many, fundamentalist Christians don't look very different from fundamentalist Moslems — they advocate the death penalty, favor harsh punishments for criminals, and justify killing in times of war, as we saw during the war with Iraq. The message of forgiveness, of salvation, and of reconciliation central to the Christian faith is set aside in the process, and even made an object of mockery when presented alongside statements favoring war and condoning violence against those perceived to be one's enemies.

Unfortunately, many sincere

Christians still think that the non-violence stance is the appendage of the sixties or of liberals. They don't realize, as the first Brethren did, that it is an inherent part of the message of the gospel. A gospel that justifies violence is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of the anti-christ. No matter how right violence seems, it is always wrong, and especially so when it is used to force our political or social agenda upon others.

Taking a consistent stand

It is important that The Brethren Church, which has taken a stand against abortion, also unequivocally condemn any acts of violence perpetrated against people seeking, performing, or advocating abortions. It is time for us to realize that the non-resistance position of the early Brethren is not to be looked on as a historic relic of the eighteenth century, but as the normative conduct for any Christian church that wants to be a faithful herald of the message of the gospel.

Violence is all around us and is on the increase, making the temptation to fight violence with violence even greater. But Christians, both individually and as part of a church community, must resist this temptation. They must hold fast to the teachings of Jesus in a world bewildered and confused by so many who proclaim to have the truth and who think they have to shout and shoot to prove it.

[†]

CHANTAL LOGAN
Bridgewater, Va.

*This article was written before the fire occurred that destroyed the Branch Davidian cult in Waco.

Pontius' Puddle



1993 General Conference Schedule

Theme: "Witnesses to the World" (Acts 1:8)

August 2-6 at Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio

Monday, August 2

6:30 p.m. — Opening Celebration, speaker
David Bryant

Tuesday, August 3

8:30 a.m. — Prayer Workshop led by David Bryant
11:00 a.m. — Auxiliary Sessions (WMS, BMOM,
NABCE)
1:30 p.m. — Business Session
3:15 p.m. — Workshops
6:30 p.m. — Concert of Prayer led by David
Bryant

Wednesday, August 4

7:15 a.m. — Pastors' Wives' Fellowship/Conti-
nental Breakfast with Judy Allison
speaking (reservation required)
8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — Business Session
12:00 noon — Women's Luncheon with Susie
Barr speaking (reservation required)

12:00 noon — Men's Picnic (reservation required)
2:30 p.m. — Auxiliary Sessions
6:30 p.m. — Hymn Sing
7:00 p.m. — Worship, featuring address by
Moderator Glenn Grumbling
9:00 p.m. — Crusader Review

Thursday, August 5

8:30 a.m. — Devotional/Corporate Prayer
9:00 a.m. — Business Session
12:00 noon — World Relief Soup Luncheon (reser-
vation requested)
1:30 p.m. — Auxiliary Sessions
5:30 p.m. — Missionary Board Banquet (reserva-
tion required)
7:00 p.m. — Missionary Board Program

Friday, August 6

9:00 a.m. — Business Session
10:45 a.m. — Challenge by new Moderator Russ
Gordon

Conference Speaker David Bryant to Focus on Prayer

David Bryant, founder and president of Concerts of Prayer International, will lead Brethren in an emphasis on prayer during this year's General Conference. Bryant will address the Conference on Monday evening, lead a prayer workshop on Tuesday morning, then lead the conference in a concert of prayer on Tuesday evening.

Bryant has worked with movements of united prayer worldwide for more than ten years, often conducting citywide united prayer rallies for spiritual awakening and world evangelization. He is a member of the National Prayer Committee in the United States and works with a number of international evangelical networks committed to prayer mobilization and world evangelization.

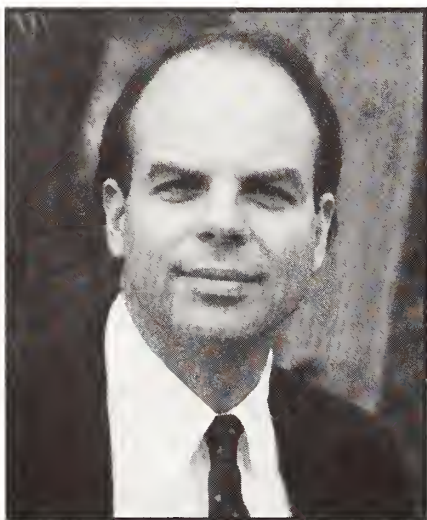
He observes, "I believe the Church is on the threshold of an unprecedented movement of con-

certed prayer. It will become, in turn, the sustaining foundation for a major advance of Christ's kingdom among the nations. The time has come. Our Father is ready to wake us up together to the fullness of Christ in new ways. Then we will trust Him in new ways that lead us to love Him and obey Him in new ways to fulfill His global cause together. Because of this hope we *must* become a seeking people once more."

Bryant has authored two popular books: *In the Gap: What It Means to be a World Christian*, and *With Concerts of Prayer: Christians Join for Spiritual Awakening and World Evangelization*. He is also the host of two national radio broadcasts: *Concert of Prayer Today* is heard each weekday and *National Concert of Prayer* airs once a month. Both programs seek to unite the nation in prayer on a regular basis.

As executive producer for *World Christian Video Series* and *Concert of Prayer Video Series* (Gospel Light, Inc.), he has brought to the church a unique multi-series training curriculum, designed especially to equip church and campus leaders in mobilizing Christians into the spiritual dynamics of world evangelization.

Bryant holds advanced degrees in both biblical studies and trans-cultural communications. He and his wife, Robyne, have three adopted children from India.



David Bryant

1993 National BYIC Convention

Theme: Follow the Leader (I John 2:5-6)

August 2-7 at Ashland University

The Youth Convention will be held on the Ashland University campus again this year. Though on the same campus with the adult Conference, the Youth Convention will nevertheless be independent of that Conference.

The youth will have their own worship services Tuesday and Thursday, their own Missions Banquet Wednesday evening, and Communion Thursday evening. They will join the adults for worship and fellowship Monday evening, worship Wednesday evening, and for the closing worship service Friday morning. Adults will have an opportunity to join the youth for the Crusader Review.

Other events on the schedule include the annual "Coffeehouse," a concert by Lee Behnken, Recreation/Swimming at the gym, daily Morning Praise and Share & Prayer groups, and the Convention closing.

A pre-Convention Planning Handbook was sent out in January and Convention registration information was mailed to advisors and pastors in mid-May. All youth attending the Convention must pre-register. No walk-in registrations will be accepted at the Convention. The last date to register is July 10, and a discount is available to those whose registrations are postmarked before July 1.

All youth at the Convention must stay on campus (men in Kilhefner, women in Myers). There will be no commuters. Attendance at all Convention events is mandatory.

The youth registration fee includes four nights of housing — Monday through Thursday. Therefore, any youth or youth sponsors who will arrive on Sunday must register with adult housing for Sunday night.

Conference Registration Information

Every person planning to attend Conference must complete a registration form (next page) — even if you live in Ashland or are not planning to stay on campus!

General instructions:

1. Room rates include sheets and towels. Bring your own **pillow, washcloths, and extra towels** if desired.

2. We must pay for every bed used, but children accompanying their parents may sleep on the floor in their parents' room at no charge. No linen will be provided. Bring a pad or sleeping bag. Single rooms have floor space for only one child, doubles for two, triples for three. Register early to assure getting your desired accommodations. A limited number of triple rooms are available.

3. Tickets for meals served in the Ashland University cafeteria are usable any day, Tuesday through Friday. Order as many as you need for the week. Individual meal cost is: breakfast—\$3.40, lunch—\$4.50, and dinner—\$5.60; children under 12 are one-half adult price.

4. There are no reduced prices for children for the Missionary Board banquet.

5. In addition to the children's program listed on the registration form, babysitting for children birth through preschool will be provided in the Kem Hall preschool rooms. Mrs. Tami Ickes and her staff will care for your babies and toddlers at the following times: Monday 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Tuesday through Friday mornings 8:15–noon; Tuesday evening 6:15–9:00; Wednesday afternoon 12:45–2:00; Wednesday evening 6:45–8:45; and Thursday evening 5:15–8:30 (during the Missionary Board banquet and program; children should eat before they arrive).

Mrs. Kim Howenstine will also have activities for children 4 years old thru 6th grade on Tuesday 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and on Thursday **during** the Missionary Board banquet and program (approximately 5:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.). Children should eat before they arrive.

Other Information

Housing — Housing will be in Andrews Hall for anyone needing housing Sunday night and Kem Hall Monday through Thursday. The housing desk will be open Sunday evening from 6:00 until 9:00; Monday from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and after the evening program; Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until noon, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and after the evening programs; Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and immediately after worship to 1:00 p.m. The housing desk will be located in the Convocation Center lobby.

Camping — Ashland County Fairgrounds, 2042 Claremont Ave., Ashland. No advance reservation is required for camping. Available are: water, electric hook-up, restrooms and showers. \$10.00 per night; pay on arrival.

Credentials — General Conference delegate credentials should be submitted in person at the earliest possible time to assure orderly seating. Credentials will be received in the Convocation Center lobby at the following times: Monday 2:00–6:00 p.m. and one-half hour following the evening program; Tuesday through Friday, 8:00–8:30 a.m. and one-half hour prior to evening programs.

Non-Delegate Guests — If you are not a delegate, you are still invited to attend Conference. Please complete a reservation form. Delegates' fees are paid in advance by their churches. Non-delegate guests are asked to check in at the credential table and pay a nominal fee of \$10.00, which entitles them to a guest name badge, a Conference packet, and use of the university facilities.

Offerings — Offerings will be received each evening. Your generous gift helps to cover Conference costs and will be most appreciated.

Pastors — freely copy this information and the registration form as a way to encourage a large delegation from your church.

More information about the Conference program will be included in the July/August EVANGELIST.

Thank you for registering by July 21. See you in August!

Theme:
"Witnesses to the World"

1993 General Conference

Registration Form

Monday, August 2, through
Friday, August 6

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____

Please reserve only one room per form. YOUTH are to register through the National BYIC if staying in YOUTH DORM. If staying with adults, use this form. **NOTE:** Registration with prepayment by **July 21** results in guaranteed reservation.

Housing:	Rates**	Prepaid by July 21	Upon arrival	Housing costs calculation
Ashland University Dormitory	Single	\$16.00	\$20.00	No. nights x rate/night
Floor: Women's restroom _____ Men's _____	Double	23.00	27.00	_____ x _____ = \$ _____
Room type: Single _____ Double _____	Triple	33.00	37.00	No. keys _____ x \$10.00 = _____
Triple _____	**no charge for children not sleeping in a bed			Total housing enclosed = \$ _____
Nights staying: S _____ M _____ T _____ W _____ Th _____				
Key deposits: \$10.00/key. At least one key per room needed.				CAMPING: Ashland Fairgrounds
Other preferences: _____				Water and electric hookups, restrooms, and showers. \$10.00 per night. Pay on arrival.

Meal Tickets

Meals served in University cafeteria; tickets usable any day; order as many as you need for the week.

	No. tickets		
Breakfast	Adults _____	x	\$3.40 = \$ _____
	Children under 12 _____	x	\$1.70 = _____
Lunch	Adults _____	x	\$4.50 = \$ _____
	Children under 12 _____	x	\$2.25 = _____
Dinner	Adults _____	x	\$5.60 = \$ _____
	Children under 12 _____	x	\$2.80 = _____

Banquet Reservations

Reservations for following events are a must due to early deadlines. Tickets ordered after July 21 subject to availability. No meal refunds after August 1.

Tues. 12:00 noon — World Relief Soup Luncheon	_____	(offering will be taken)
Wed. 7:00 a.m. Pastors' Wives Continental Breakfast/Fellowship	_____	x \$2.00 = _____
Wed. noon — Women's Luncheon	Adults _____	x \$6.75 = _____
	Children under 12 _____	x \$4.00 = _____
	Children under 5 _____	x free
Wed. noon — Men's Picnic	Adults _____	x \$5.00 = _____
	Children under 12 _____	x \$3.00 = _____
Thurs. eve. — Missionary Board Banquet	_____	x \$8.75 = _____
Total Meals and Banquets Enclosed = \$ _____		

Summary Totals

Total Housing Enclosed	= \$ _____
Total Meals and Banquets Enclosed	= \$ _____
Total Children's Program Enclosed	= \$ _____
Total Enclosed	= \$ _____

Make checks payable to

General Conference Housing

Send to:

General Conference Housing
524 College Avenue
Ashland, OH 44805

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Reg. # _____
Date rec. _____
Amount rec. _____
Check # _____

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM (ages 4 years through completed 6th grade):

Tuesday through Thursday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; Fri., 8:15 a.m. to noon.

Lunch provided Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Family Rates	Week	Day		Week	Day
1 child	\$46.00	\$15.00;	2 or more children	\$70.00	\$24.00
Child's Name	Age/Grade Completed	Days (circle)			
_____	_____	T W Th F	\$ _____		
_____	_____	T W Th F	\$ _____		
_____	_____	T W Th F	\$ _____		
Total for Children's Program			\$ _____		

Mail this form as soon as possible with payment in full (but no later than July 21).

Send to: General Conference Housing, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805

Hope for a Hurting World

A statement by the National Association of Evangelicals*

OUR WORLD is hurting. It has been hurting since the day humanity alienated itself from its Creator through sin. Drought and famine, catastrophe and disaster, sickness and plague, war and strife, oppression and discrimination have haunted humankind ever since. And, although in our century, enormous advances have been made in science and technology, industry and productivity, communication and transportation, medicine and vaccines, the earth is still strewn with victims of society's growing violence, even the horror of violence against the unborn.

Testimonies to God's mercy

Fortunately, God has not left us without testimony to His mercy and grace in the lives of those Christians who share themselves, their time and substance, to help life's victims and the needy. For them, we give thanks to God.

Nonetheless, pain continues as a stark reality, even in our rich and favored land: The homeless in their despair, the unemployed in their defeat, broken families in their distress, minorities in their sense of alienation, ghetto dwellers in their plight, refugees in their loneliness, AIDS victims in their suffering, criminals in their hatred, and prisoners in their isolation.

For others, the hurt is sometimes concealed behind brave

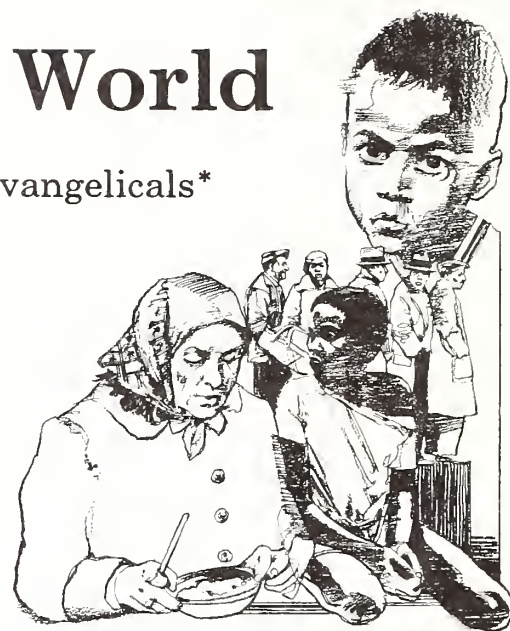
façades: The grief of broken careers, unfulfilled aspirations and humiliating disappointments, the misery of unresolved guilt and abasing shame, the chronic wounds of unrequited love and depressing loneliness, the gnawing ache of personal worthlessness and life's emptiness, and the trauma of meaninglessness and despondency of hopelessness.

Perhaps the most disturbing hurt of all is the tragic waste of children, victimized by emotional, physical, and sexual abuse in their homes and communities, impoverished in hostile ghettos and duped into drug addiction by unscrupulous dealers, poisoned with gang mentality and viciousness, polluted with and victimized by pornography, deprived of their moral, spiritual, and intellectual development by irreligious families and ineffective, secularized schools.

God has not abandoned His world

In the midst of such hurt and pain, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) affirms that God has not abandoned His fallen world nor left it without hope. Jesus Christ is our hope! "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). It is the good news of Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord, the hope of the world, to which we bear our witness.

We believe that the church of Christ provides the only means of bringing a lasting hope to our hurting world. When our churches have ignored those who are in need and have focused on their own well-being, we confess that we have denied the hope given to us. Where we have failed to touch our hurting world in Jesus' name, we repent of our indifference and insensitivity. We pledge to renew our commitment to God, to each other, and to those in need so that our churches will serve as effective



channels of hope to distressed and suffering people.

We must follow Jesus' example

In bringing hope to a hurting world, we must follow the example of Jesus, who fed the hungry, healed the sick, cared for children, and reached out to the poor and neglected of His day. To do otherwise would deny the very faith that motivates us to share the good news of salvation. As the apostle James stated, "Faith, not accompanied by action, is dead" (James 2:17).

Therefore, in Jesus' name we must share with victims of disaster, provide for the needs of the poor, address the causes of poverty, support the unemployed, and show compassion to those whose hearts ache and whose lives are burdensome. Because Jesus loves us, we must reach out to the victims of crime and oppression, racial discrimination and injustice, child neglect and abuse. Because God commands us to do so, we must help care for the sick, the handicapped, disabled, and the elderly.

Therefore, we give thanks to God for all He has given to us and commit ourselves to bringing even more spiritual and physical resources to our hurting world in the name of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, our eternal hope and the hope of the world. [†]

**This statement was adopted as a position paper by delegates to the 51st annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), held March 7-9, 1993, in Orlando, Fla. The position paper reflected the convention theme, "Hope for a Hurting World."*

The Brethren Church is a denominational member of NAE, and some local Brethren congregations and Brethren individuals also hold membership in the Association.



The Last Supper. Clockwise from top center: Rev. Fred Miller (in the role of Jesus), Ralph Kiser, Daniel Raynes, David Fitzsimons, Nathan Good, Eddie Ettinger, Reggie Smith, Roland McDonald, David Huffman, Leon Shank, David Armstrong, Tom Hinkle, and Whit Kemper.

Photo by Barbara Roderick

Overflow Crowds Pack Mt. Olive Brethren Church To See Musical Drama of Events from the Life of Jesus

Pineville, Va. — A combined total of approximately 600 people crowded into the Mt. Olive Brethren Church building on Palm Sunday for the two presentations of "Sacrifice of Glory," a musical drama of events from the life of Jesus, including the feeding of the multitude, the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, the crucifixion, and the resurrection.

Even though as many people as possible squeezed into the church sanctuary and balcony (capacity approximately 200), some had to view the production on closed-circuit television in the church social hall. Despite the crowded conditions in the sanctuary, no one seemed to mind as they watched, listened, and even wept as the Easter story unfolded.

The Senior Choir and approximately 40 "actors" and "actresses" from the Mt. Olive congregation combined their efforts to put on the production, which was written by Dave Clark and Russell Mauldin. The role of Jesus was portrayed by Rev. Fred Miller, pastor of the congregation.

The choir, directed by Henry Lineweaver, and the drama unit, headed by Lois Johnson, began work on the production in early January. Numerous other people contributed their time and talents in making the sets, changing props, and devising and operating the intricate lighting system for the production.

This was the first time that the Mt. Olive Church had attempted anything of this magnitude. The crowds who attended the performances and the positive feedback from those who came confirmed to the church that it was time and effort well-spent. A strong witness for Christ was made to the community.

— reported by Odessa Shelton, moderator



An angel (Sherrie Hussey) ministers to Christ (Rev. Fred Miller) in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Photo by Carol Seekford

Southeastern District Brethren Gather for Worship and Fellowship at Celebration VIII

Maurertown, Va. — Brethren of the Southeastern District gathered on Sunday evening, March 28, at the Maurertown Brethren Church for Celebration VIII, the annual district gathering for worship and fellowship.

This year's celebration, like those of the past, was planned by the district pastors and included special presentations by members of several of the district churches. Rev. Doc Shank, pastor of the Liberty Brethren Church, served as master of ceremonies, and Maurertown pastor Rev. Richard Craver led singing. Ginny Haddock of the St. James Church played the organ for the service and Deanna Benshoff of the Hagers-town Church played piano for the congregational singing.

Special music included a clarinet solo by Alicia Clark of the St. Luke Church; a vocal solo by Ron Miller of the Linwood Church; two selections by the Maurertown Church choir under the direction of Maxine Craver; two vocal numbers by Joyce Perry from the Waterbrook Church; a medley by a brass ensemble from the St. James Church; three selections by a men's chorus from the St. James Church; and a solo by Dr. Harold Barnett, pastor of the Mathias Church of the Brethren. Dickie Helsley of the Waterbrook Church presented a skit.

A surprise presentation was made to Rev. Doc and Jean Shank in apprecia-

tion for their many years of faithful service to the Southeastern District. Rev. Brian Moore gave each of the two a plaque, and Rev. Pat Velanzon gave Doc a big bunch of bananas to remind him of

Rev. Brian Moore, (2nd from r.) makes a special presentation honoring Rev. Doc and Jean Shank (l.), while Maurertown Pastor Richard Craver (far r.) looks on.



his time in Africa as a Brethren missionary. All the district pastors then donned cardigan sweaters in the "Doc Shank" style. The Shanks have served in the Southeastern District for more than 20 years, and Doc still pastors the Liberty Church two Sundays a month. He is in his 48th year of service as a pastor, including his years in Nigeria.

In addition to receiving a plaque, Rev.

Shank also handed out some plaques as well — one to the Maurertown Church for providing it facilities throughout the years for this event; and a second to the Maurertown W.M.S. for providing the refreshments each year.

Ironically, this year the youth of the district (primarily the Maurertown and St. James youth) provided the "refreshments" in the form of a spaghetti dinner

held just prior to the celebration. A freewill offering in the amount of \$500 was received at the meal, which will be used to sponsor summer camp counselors and helpers. An offering of \$325 was also received during the celebration to help youth who want to attend camp but who need financial help.

— reported by Kathy Velanzon and Rev. Doc Shank

15 Brethren Receive Degrees From Ashland University

Ashland, Ohio — Fifteen Brethren were among the 1,230 students who received degrees May 8 from Ashland University.

Dr. Walter B. Waetjen, AU's interim president for the past year, gave the commencement address. In the address, Dr. Waetjen, who served for more than 40 years in large, public-supported institutions, said that he found it "refreshing" that Ashland provides its students with opportunities to develop spiritually.

The following Brethren students received the Bachelor of Arts degree:

Eric J. Bargerhuff, member of the Mexico, Ind., First Brethren Church, religion major, *magna cum laude*.

Sally A. Conrad, friend of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, applied music/music theory major, *cum laude*.

Philip S. Courtright, friend of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, political science/economics major.

Becki L. Fulmer (Mishawaka, Ind.), member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, sociology/religion major.

Michelle K. Geaslen, member of the Fremont, Ohio, Brethren Church, fashion merchandising major.

Kimberly J. Miller, member of the Sarasota, Fla., First Brethren Church, psychology/sociology major.

Richard L. Rader, friend of the University Church in Ashland, music theory major.

Todd L. Roblin, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, history major.

J. Nathan Shultz, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, business administration major, *cum laude*; son of Brethren elder Dr. and Mrs. John Shultz.

Receiving other degrees were:

Linda C. Ebert, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, Bachelor of Music degree with a music education major.

Tiffany A. Flickinger, member of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, Bachelor of Science in Social Work degree with a major in social work, *magna cum laude*.

Jeffrey D. Gilmer, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree with a computer information systems major; son of Brethren pastor Dr. and Mrs. Arden Gilmer.

Jeffrey S. Paull, member of the Smithville Brethren Church, Bachelor of Science degree with a comprehensive science major.

Paul T. Sluss, member of the Roanoke, Ind., First Brethren Church, Bachelor of Science in Education degree with an elementary education major, *cum laude*; son of Brethren pastor Rev. and Mrs. James Sluss.

Jennifer E. Thomas, member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, Bachelor of Science in Education degree with a major in education of the handicapped.

Special Services at Masontown Feature Pastors From Nearby Brethren Churches

Masontown, Pa. — "It's Time to Reach Out" was the theme of special "Brethren style" spring services held April 25 through May 2 at the Masontown Brethren Church.

The theme emphasized the importance of reaching out to the lost in the community. The nightly services featured pastors of nearby Brethren churches.

Rev. Russell King, pastor of the Masontown Church, kicked off the event by bringing the message on Sunday evening (April 25). Rev. Bill Yoder, pastor of the Valley (Jones Mills) Brethren Church, was the Monday evening speaker; Pastor Bruce Foster of the Highland (Marianna) Brethren Church spoke Tuesday evening; a worship team from the Mount Pleasant Brethren Church headed by Pastor David Morrison led the Wednesday evening service; Rev. Stanley Waybright of the White Dale (Terra Alta, W.Va.) Brethren Church was featured Thursday evening; and

Pastor Ralph John of the Cameron (W.Va) and Quiet Dell (Aleppo, Pa.) Brethren Churches spoke on Friday.

Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, was the guest speaker on Sunday morning. He spoke on the subject "Reaching Out in Missions."

Special music for the week of services was provided by local talent, the Masontown Brethren Church choir, Rev. Bill Yoder, Jody Majesky of the Highland Brethren Church, and the Waybrights. The Cameron Brethren Church youth puppet team also made a presentation.

Fellowship time followed each evening service, and a carry-in meal was enjoyed on Sunday. An average of 35 people attended the services.

According to Masontown Pastor Russ King, "This was a great way to meet other Brethren pastors and to enjoy the special ministries from other churches."

— reported by Pastor Russell King

Celebration on Mother's Day At North Georgetown Church Includes Baptism of Thirteen

North Georgetown, Ohio — Mother's Day was a special day of celebration at the North Georgetown First Brethren Church, with the baptism of 13 new believers and the receiving of 14 members into the church.

During the 9:30 a.m. Sunday school hour, all classes were dismissed and 137 people gathered in the sanctuary to witness the baptisms. Some family groups were among the 13 who were baptized. Also baptized were three grandchildren of Pastor Fred and Carolyn Brandon — Jeremiah and Rebekah Perdue and Matthew Reich.

During the 10:30 a.m. worship service the 147 in attendance witnessed a laying on of hands service for those newly baptized, and the reception of 14 into church membership.

The North Georgetown Church is experiencing considerable growth and is considering ways to expand its facilities to accommodate the many new families.

The North Georgetown Church is also celebrating its centennial year. It will conclude the centennial celebration on June 20 with Homecoming Sunday. Rev. Lynn Mercer, a son of the congregation who now pastors the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio, will return home to present the morning message. Former pastor Rev. Dave Kerner and his wife, Diane, now serving as Brethren missionaries in Colombia, South America, will tell about their mission work following a carry-in fellowship dinner. All former pastors are invited to attend and participate in this special occasion.



Garden of Gethsemane scene. Left to right, Dave Schrecengost, Rick Iverson, Greg Smith (as Jesus), John Gourley, and John Winters.

Pleasant View Palm Sunday Services Feature Drama Written and Performed by Local Men

Vandergrift, Pa. — The morning worship services on Palm Sunday at the Pleasant View Brethren Church featured a drama written and performed by men of the congregation.

Entitled "Footsteps of Betrayal," the drama, written by Dan Zigler, traced the steps leading up to the betrayal of Jesus. The 40-45 minute drama was presented by Dave Schrecengost, Rick Iverson, Greg Smith, John Gourley, and John Winters.

The stage settings, costumes, make-up, and lighting were also all done by members of the Pleasant View Church.

— reported by Nancy McGraw, secretary

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead! Fill their lives with sweetness! Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them, and while their hearts can be thrilled by them.

— Henry Ward Beecher

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Youth from PA and SE Districts Travel to Kentucky For Second Annual Work Trip to Riverside School

Lost Creek, Ky. — April 16–18 was a memorable weekend for 35 youth and advisors from the Pennsylvania and Southeastern Districts who participated in the second annual work trip of the Pennsylvania District Brethren Youth in Christ (BYIC) to Riverside Christian School.

This year the Pennsylvania BYIC invited youth from the Southeastern District to join them in the adventure.

The Friday night trip to Lost Creek was no small part of the adventure, for it was only after numerous stops and a number of wrong turns that the group finally arrived at the school. Despite minimal amounts of sleep for some of the youth and none for most of the adults, the group prepared for a day of labor. After a hearty breakfast prepared by great cooks Rick and Derwood, the group set to work. Some hauled cement block; others washed classroom windows; still others laid tile in the classroom hallways. A few brave men (or were there some women, too?) tackled the removal of a stump, while others shoveled coal. One group painted a storage shed, while several outdoors types planted flowers and did general yard work.

By supper time, work was finished, so after the meal some of the hearty ones took a hike up a mountain trail. The athletically inclined showed their prowess in some vigorous volleyball.

On Sunday morning the group divided up for worship services, with some attending at Drushal Memorial, others at Clayhole, and still others at Neece Memorial Chapel. The youth provided special music at the services and the group from Cameron made a puppet presentation.

Following worship, all regrouped at

Riverside to enjoy a delicious carry-in dinner provided by the Riverside staff. Then the visitors ended their stay at Lost Creek with a circle of prayer and Rick Callen singing the song "Thank You" to the fine Riverside staff.

The 35 youth and advisors arrived home during the wee hours of Monday morning, exhausted but blessed from having done the Lord's work, and looking forward to a return trip next spring.

— reported by Linda Barr, Pennsylvania District Youth Ministry Associate and Southeastern District Youth Advisor



Youth and their advisors from the Pennsylvania and Southeastern Districts take a break from their work at Riverside Christian School for this photo session.

Easter at Cheyenne Church Features Several "Firsts"

Cheyenne, Wyo. — Easter morning this year at the Cheyenne Brethren Church featured several "firsts."

The 6:00 a.m. Sunrise service (the Cheyenne Brethren believe in true sunrise services!) featured a "first-person" account of the resurrection by Susan Hurd in the role of Mary Magdalene. In past years Cheyenne pastor Rev. G. Emery Hurd (Sue's husband) has given first-person accounts of the Easter events in the role of men of the Bible. But this was the first time a woman of the Bible was presented in this way, and Mrs. Hurd was the first woman to make such a presentation for the Sunrise service.

Mrs. Hurd not only played the role of Mary Magdalene, but she also made the New Testament-era style garments that she wore while making the presentation.

Following the Sunrise service, the Brethren Men of Mission of the Cheyenne Church sponsored the annual Easter breakfast. This featured another first, the first meal cooked in the Cheyenne Church's totally completed new kitchen. The new kitchen was part of a building/remodeling program that has been in progress at the Cheyenne Church for some time.

Easter morning at Cheyenne continued with an egg hunt for the children at 9:15 followed by Sunday school at 9:30 and worship at 10:45. The worship serv-

ice included a musical selection by the newly re-formed church choir, which was an "almost first."

— reported by Alice M. Tharp



Mary Magdalene (Susan Hurd) shares the Easter message with a bystander (Rev. Emery Hurd, Sue's husband).

Six Brethren Receive Degrees in May From Ashland Theological Seminary

Ashland, Ohio — Six Brethren were among the 116 students who received degrees from Ashland Theological Seminary May 22 during the seminary's commencement ceremony.

Dr. G. William Benz, the new president of Ashland University and Seminary, presided at the ceremony, with ATS vice president Dr. Frederick Finks assisting and presenting special recognition awards. The commencement address was delivered by Dr. Knute Larson, senior pastor of The Chapel in Akron, Ohio, and former pastor of the Grace Brethren Church in Ashland. Prior to his address, Dr. Larson was honored with a Distinguished Christian Service Award by the seminary.

Following are the Brethren students who received degrees:

Roy Allen Andrews, a member of the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church, received the Master of Arts in Church Administration degree (with honors). A graduate of Ball State University, Mr. Andrews taught and coached for several years, then was office manager for a small manufacturing company during the year immediately prior to his entering seminary. On June 1, 1993, he became associate pastor of the Nappanee, Ind., First Brethren Church. Roy and his wife, Mesu, are the parents of two elementary school-age daughters.

Carolyn Cooksey, a member of the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, received the Master of Arts degree (with high honors). The wife of Rev. David Cooksey (Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church) and the mother of three children (two now in high school and one at Ashland University), Mrs. Cooksey spread her seminary training over a six-year period. She also worked at the Ashland University library, where she continues to be employed. She is a member of the Spiritual Formation Commission of The Brethren Church and is assisting in the development of materials on the spiritual disciplines and prayer. In conjunction with her husband's position, she serves in an unofficial role as counselor to pastors' wives.

Kenneth Edward Cutrer, pastor of the University (Brethren) Church on the Ashland University campus, received the Doctor of Ministry degree. In addition to this degree and a Master of Arts degree from the seminary (received in 1989), Mr. Cutrer also has both a bachelor's and a master's degree in educa-

tion, and has taught for several years at Ashland High School. He and his wife, Gretchen, have two small children.

Matthew W. Hamel, a member of the Johnstown, Pa., Second Brethren Church, received the Master of Arts degree. A graduate of Ashland University with a B.A. in history, Mr. Hamel wrote *A Congregational History of the Southeast District of the Brethren Church* while studying at the seminary. He currently works part-time for Book-Masters, a local publishing company in Ashland. Believing that he is called to teach, he is in the process of seeking a teaching position at the college level prior to pursuing doctoral work in

church history. He and his wife, Deborah, have a five-year-old son.

Robert C. Trube, a member of the Smoky Row Brethren Church, Worthington, Ohio, received the Master of Arts degree (with high honors, 4.0 average). He also received the Outstanding Senior Award among those completing the M.A. degree. Mr. Trube is the Ohio Regional Coordinator for InterVarsity. He and his wife, Marilyn, have one elementary school-age son.

Olivia Washington, a former member of the Brethren Fellowship of the Savior, Shaker Heights, Ohio, received the Master of Divinity degree. She holds an Associate of Arts degree from Chicago College of Commerce and worked for ten years as a court reporter in Cleveland, Ohio, before entering seminary. She believes that she is called to plant a church in inner-city Cleveland.



Brethren graduates from Ashland Theological Seminary this year were (l. to r.) Kenneth Cutrer, Carolyn Cooksey, Roy Andrews, Matthew Hamel, and (not shown) Robert Trube and Olivia Washington.

Rev. Alvin Grumbling Honored As Volunteer of Year at Flora

Flora, Ind. — Rev. Alvin Grumbling was honored as "Volunteer of the Year" by the Volunteer Program of the Brethren Healthcare Center (the Brethren's Home) of Flora, Ind., in recognition of his outstanding dedication to the volunteer program.

As an expression of this honor, Rev. Grumbling was presented a plaque at the Brethren Healthcare Volunteer Luncheon held April 20 at the center.

Rev. Grumbling, who pastors the Flora First Brethren Church, has included the Brethren's Home as part of his parish. During the past 16 years he has held Monday morning worship serv-

ices at the center; led Good Friday, Easter, World Day of Prayer, and Communion services; conducted memorial services; witnessed signatures; and worked with the Comfort Club. He also visits the residents, knows most of them by name, and is a friend to all who know him.

— reported by Mildred Mullendore

Rev. Alvin Grumbling with plaque honoring him as Volunteer of the Year.

Photo by Terri Kelly



From The



Grape Vine

Jamie Gillespie was commissioned on May 16 at the Vinco Brethren Church, Mineral Point, Pa., for service this summer as a Pennsylvania District Crusader. Jamie, the daughter of Karen and Tim Gillespie, is a junior in high school. She is active in the Vinco BYIC and writes for the church newsletter. The commissioning included a scriptural challenge to Jamie by Pastor Jim Tomb, responses by the congregation, and prayer for Jamie. During the prayer, the members of the youth group stood side by side around Jamie and placed their hands on her shoulders.

The **Flora, Ind., First Brethren Church** installed two new restrooms in the basement of the church building during January and February. Accord-

ing to reporter Mildred Mullendore, the new restrooms, which replace old ones that were badly outdated, are a nice addition to the church building. The work was done by the J.L. Collins Company.

The **Disaster Response Program** of the Church of the Brethren, which The Brethren Church supports financially, continues to focus on needs created by Hurricane Andrew. Work continues on repair and rebuilding projects in Homestead, Fla., and in Franklin, La., with the work likely to take many more months, especially in Florida. The program has also responded to needs in the Tampa area resulting from tornadoes and in Horseshoe Beach, Fla., resulting from winter storms. The Brethren Church sent \$3,483 to the program for Hurricane Andrew relief last October and another \$1,000 in April of this year for disaster relief. Donna Derr, director of the program, has expressed her hope that some members of The Brethren Church could be recruited to work on these disaster projects. If you would consider volunteering, contact The Brethren Church National Office.

A conference on "Anabaptism: A Heritage and Its Twenty-First Century Prospects" will be held September 29-October 2, 1993, at Bridgewater

College in Bridgewater, Va., sponsored by the Forum for Religious Studies of the college. Further information about the conference may be obtained by contacting Steve Longenecker or Carl Bowman in care of Bridgewater College (Bridgewater, VA 22801).

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In Memory

Lorain Johnson, 90, May 11. Member of the South Bend First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Helen K. Galbraith, 56, May 9. Member since 1983 of the Oakville First Brethren Church, where she served as treasurer of a W.M.S. group for many years and was active in various capacities in the congregation. She was Oakville postmaster for more than 30 years and a member and past state president of the Post Office Association, NAPUS. Services by Pastor Dan Lawson.

Elizabeth Fitzsimons, 80, May 4. Member of the Corinth Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Brady and Glen McFarland.

Madge R. Dutchess, 85, May 1. Charter member (1960) and deaconess at the Kokomo First Brethren Church and former member and deaconess at the South Bend First Brethren Church, where she was a member of the W.M.S. and the Home Builders Class. Services by Rev. Marc Bendes.

Dorothea Nice, 84, April 26. Member for 40 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church, where she was also active in W.M.S. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Wayne Helmick, 69, April 24. Member of the Masontown Brethren Church, where he was a former trustee and head usher. Services by Pastor Russell King.

Mary E. Painter, 94, April 21. Member of the Maurertown Brethren Church, where she was also a W.M.S. member for many years. Services by Rev. Hardy Lutz and Pastor Richard Craver.

Margaret Blacksten, 88, April 18. Member and

deaconess at the Linwood Brethren Church, where she served as Sunday school pianist for 25 years and was a member of W.M.S. and the Linwood Sewing Circle. Though unable to attend for the past three years, she continued to roll bandages at home for international aid. Services by Pastor Robert Keplinger.

Nettie Nice, 56, April 17. Member for 40 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services in Fort Wayne, Ind., where she lived the past several years.

Jane E. Hendricks, 67, April 1. Member since 1972 of the Sarasota First Brethren Church, where she was faithful to all services, had been a member of the choir, played the piano for a Sunday school class, and did calling on behalf of the church. Services by Pastor Daniel Gray.

Helen Sriver, 78, March 27. Member of the South Bend First Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher and superintendent. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Royal E. Fink, March 19. Faithful member since 1982 of the Sarasota First Brethren Church.

Breckonridge "Breck" Hancock, 93, March 19. Member since 1966 of the Sarasota First Brethren Church. Services by Dr. J. D. Hamel.

Viola (Tessie) Carter, 71, February 25. Faithful member since 1987 of the Sarasota First Brethren Church. Services by Dr. J. D. Hamel.

Clem Steiner, 84, February 20. Member since 1971 of the Sarasota First Brethren Church.

Weddings

Jennifer Morehead to **Michael Bailey**, May 22, at the Muncie First Brethren Church; Pastor

Keith Bennett officiating. Members of the Muncie First Brethren Church.

Debbie Dillman to **Bryan Holliman**, April 24, at the Corinth Brethren Church; Pastor Bill Brady officiating. Members of the Corinth Brethren Church.

Marsha Elaine Smith to **Christopher Thomas Zoller**, April 17, at the Gretna Brethren Church; Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Gretna Brethren Church.

Debra Jean Weiskittle to **Christopher Howard Egbert**, March 20, at the Gretna Brethren Church; Pastor Lynn Mercer officiating. Bride a member of the Gretna Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

Melvin and Marjorie Kring, 50th, June 26. Members of the Ardmore Brethren Church, where they have been members of the Deacon Council for 40 years.

Wilbur and Alice Roby, 60th, March 5. Members of the Gretna Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Berlin: 6 by transfer

Sarasota: 6 by baptism

South Bend: 3 by baptism

Mountain View: 3 by baptism

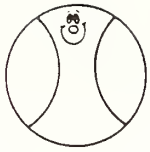
North Georgetown: 13 by baptism
1 by affirmation of faith

Linwood: 7 by baptism, 2 by transfer

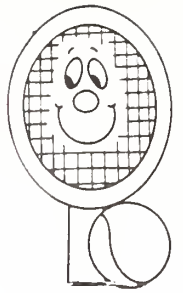
St. James: 8 by baptism, 2 by transfer

Pleasant View: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

North Manchester: 9 by baptism, 1 by transfer



Little Crusader



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

With summer fast approaching, I would guess that most of you are involved or soon will be involved in some kind of sport activity. Isn't it fun to play these sports with your friends?

But sometimes we have so much fun playing that we don't want to lose. And sometimes we want to win so badly that we will do almost anything to be the winner.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 22:37-39 that the greatest commandment of all is to love the Lord God with all our hearts. The second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves.

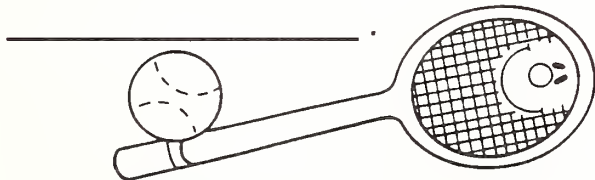
Do you know who your neighbor is? Everyone! Jesus made it quite clear that we are to show love to everyone. If we try very hard to love others, then we will not be trying to hurt them.

It may not be very much fun to lose. But it is neat to know that if we are playing fair, we are being good Christian boys and girls and we are following God's commandments.

Have fun!

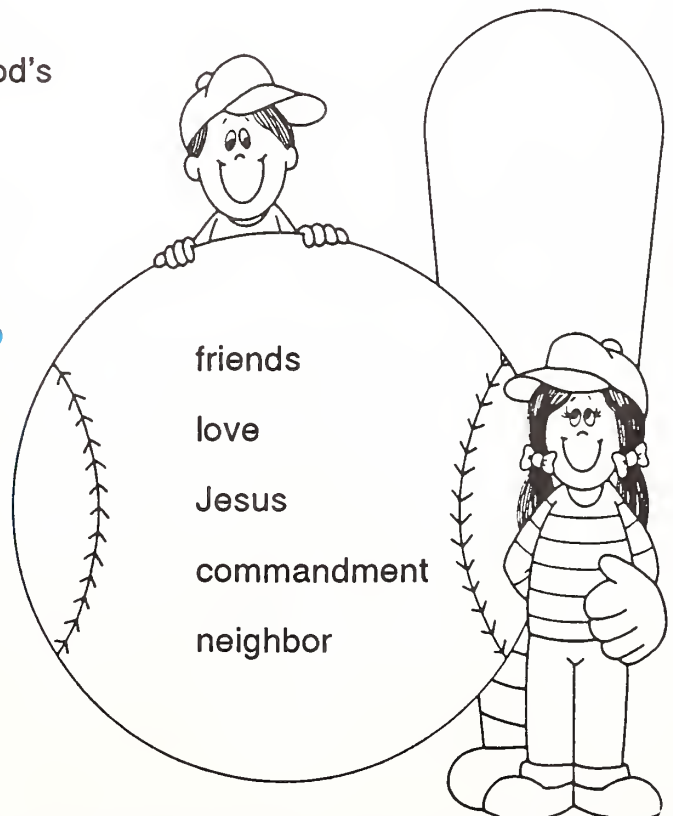
Loving others is something we have to work at all the time. Here are some thoughts to help us. Find the missing words from the paragraphs above and fill in the blanks.

1. _____ your neighbor as yourself.
2. Your neighbor is _____.
3. We should always try very hard to follow God's



Use the word list at the right to help you unscramble these letters.

1. sesuJ _____
2. elov _____
3. deanomctmnm _____
4. horeginb _____
5. senirdf _____



News-Notes From Around the World

Malaysia

Christian leaders in Malaysia say that unpublished 1991 census figures indicate that Christianity is on the rise in that country. Of the 17.5 million people in Malaysia, 8.1 percent are Christian — up from 6.5 percent in 1980.

During the same period (1980–1991), Hinduism dropped slightly, as did Confucianism and Taoism among the Chinese populace. Other folk and tribal religions also declined slightly. On the other hand, the census figures indicate a significant rise of Islam — from about 53 percent to about 60 percent of the population.

— *World Evangelical Report*

Albania

The sudden birth and growth of at least 40 evangelical churches in Albania following 25 years of an absolute ban on religion is being described as an “instant church” by mission workers in that country.

Weekly fellowship meetings in the country are marked by great enthusiasm and hearty singing, according to a report by the Albanian Encouragement Project, a coalition of 30 evangelical mission groups operating in the country. An easy-to-read Bible in the Albanian language was scheduled for publication by the European Christian Mission at the end of April, the first complete Bible in the national language.

Meanwhile, the country's 3.4 million people continue to receive the Christian message through Trans World Radio programs that are broadcast over Radio Tirana in a number of languages. The radio broadcasts have been so well received that a follow-up office, staffed by Albanians, has been opened.

The life of the “instant church” is threatened, however, by a law that may severely limit freedom of worship in the country. An earlier proposal suggested the creation of four government-designated “historical” religions — not including Protestants. That proposal was rejected, but a new law on religion is pending.

— *World Evangelical Report*

Uganda

Armed warriors surrendered their rifles and publicly turned their backs on violence during a Christian rally in the northern region of Uganda. The young Karimojong — from one of the proudest and most independent of Uganda's tribes — laid down their AK47 rifles at the end

of a sermon asking, “Who are You Serving?” The fighting men who declared that they wanted to serve Jesus were the latest of several hundred Karimojong to renounce their warring ways during a preaching campaign organized by churches in the region with the support of Youth With a Mission. In a few recent cases, acts of reconciliation by Karimojong men to former victims have included the return of highly-prized stolen cattle.

— *World Evangelical Report*

Liberia

Four wells being drilled in strategically located church compounds in Liberia's water-and-electricity-deprived capital of Monrovia will be a lifeline for the thousands of homeless and displaced people in the areas who desperately need clean drinking water. But the wells may also prove to be a source of financing for other relief and development projects.

The project was conceived by the Association of Evangelicals of Liberia (AEL), and the wells are being drilled with funding from World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals.

When the wells are fully operational, thousands of people in the area will be able to draw water from them free. But in addition, AEL plans to deliver water to area businesses for a fee. The income from this service will then be used by AEL to finance other relief and development projects.

— *World Evangelical Report*

Germany

Evangelist Billy Graham held the most far-reaching crusade of his 50-plus years of ministry March 17–21 from Essen, Germany. The crusade originated in the 7,000-seat Grugahalle in Essen, a German city of 600,000 inhabitants, and was transmitted by satellite to nearly 400 locations throughout Germany, Austria, and German-speaking Switzerland, and to an additional 1,000 locations in 57 other countries and territories throughout Europe. These meetings were held in churches, town halls, cinemas, prisons, and even at an airport on the small island of Sylt in the North Sea.

Nearly one million people attended the German-speaking venues, with an additional 7.2 million attending at the non-German-speaking locations, making this the largest evangelistic effort in the history of the Christian church. Nearly 250,000 people responded to Mr.

Graham's invitation to make a commitment to Christ.

To enable everyone in the satellite locations to clearly understand the gospel, a team of interpreters simultaneously interpreted Mr. Graham's sermon into 44 different languages. The appropriate local language was transmitted instead of German during the satellite transmission of Mr. Graham's preaching. Technology experts agree that this was the biggest technological project in Europe since last year's Olympics in Barcelona, Spain.

— *Billy Graham Evangelistic Association news release*

Latin America

Latin America will soon have its first Christian satellite radio network, thanks to a joint effort involving two of the world's pioneers in broadcasting to South and Central America. Trans World Radio (TWR) and HCJB World Radio have agreed to establish a 24-hour satellite service that will be available to all stations in Spanish-speaking Latin America, stretching from the U.S.-Mexican border to the southern tip of Chile. Target date for initiating the service is November 20, 1993.

“This is the first time that digital satellite technology will be used to provide high quality, Christ-honoring radio programming to stations throughout Latin America on a regular basis,” says James Munger, TWR's satellite coordinator for Latin America.

“We are eager to join forces with Latin America's evangelical churches — to assist them in the vision of reaching millions living in cities which are mushrooming throughout the continent,” explains HCJB Broadcasting Director Glen Volkhardt. “More than half the population of Latin America is under 25 years of age, and many of these young people are not touched by the local church.”

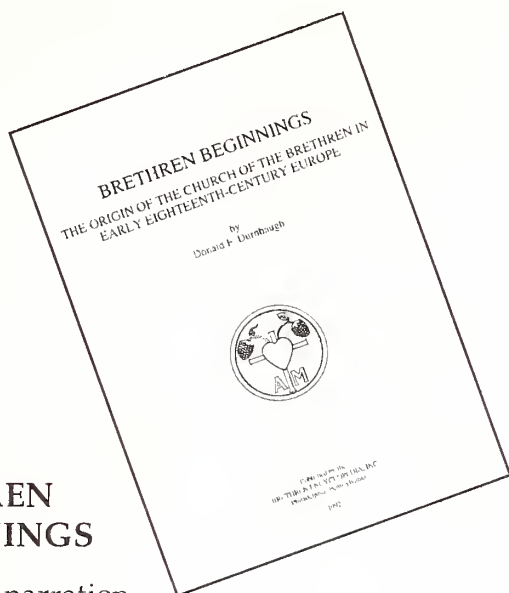
— *Trans World Radio News Release*

United States

The Tennessee House and Senate passed a bill on May 19, 1993, allowing for student initiated prayer at public school non-compulsory events. The bill will allow public schools in Tennessee to accommodate the free speech and exercise rights of students who desire voluntarily to initiate and give benedictions, invocations, or prayers in the schools or on school property during non-compulsory school events.

The Rutherford Institute News Release

TWO NEW STUDIES IN BRETHREN/PIETISM HISTORY

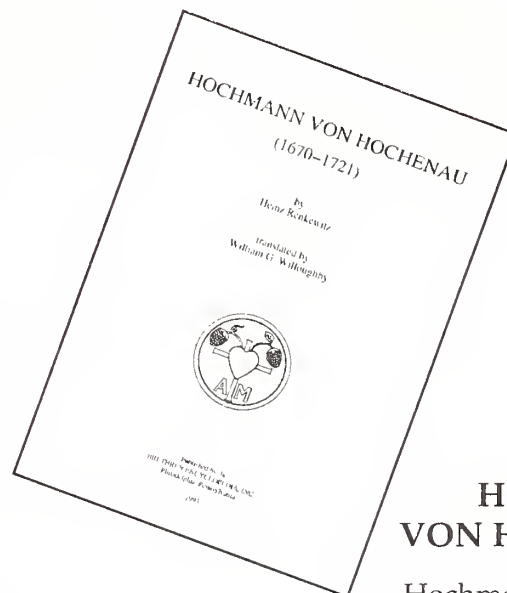


BRETHREN BEGINNINGS

This is the narration that accompanies the author's well-known EUROPEAN ORIGINS, updated to include the latest research. Most of this material has never been published in any form. Here is the detailed story of the beginning of the Brethren movement in Europe in the early part of the eighteenth century.

Dr. Donald F. Durnbaugh
Professor of church history
Bethany Theological Seminary
and
The Young Center for the Study of Anabaptist
and Pietistic Groups
Elizabethtown College

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HOCHMANN VON HOCHENAU

Hochmann is the most important non-Brethren associated with the beginnings of the Brethren movement. Some regard him as the "co-founder" of the Brethren. This original work by Renkewitz is the first book-length treatment of the life of this important Pietistic leader. Willoughby's translation makes this the only work on Hochmann in English.

Dr. William G. Willoughby
Professor of Philosophy and Religion
University of LaVerne

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105th General Conference

August 2-6

Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio

Theme: "Witnesses to the World"

Theme Verse: Acts 1:8

The Brethren Church is about to launch a bold evangelism thrust this fall through the Passing On the Promise process. It will involve outreach to "our world," beginning first in our "Jerusalem" — our own communities — and reaching beyond to "the ends of the earth."

But any evangelistic effort will only succeed to the degree that it is bathed in prayer. So a major part of our Conference will be devoted to praying and to instruction related to prayer.

The 1993 Conference will feature:

- David Bryant as outside speaker and prayer leader
- Rich times of worship and fellowship
- Addresses by Moderator Glenn Grumbling and Moderator-Elect Russell Gordon
- Practical workshops
- A variety of luncheons and banquets
- Updates on denominational ministries
- Business sessions

*Don't miss this year's General Conference! Make plans now to attend and complete the registration form on page 13 no later than **July 21**.*

See you in August!



David Bryant

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THE BRETHREN
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JULY/AUGUST 1993

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ANYWHERE

1993 General Conference Theme Logo

Putting Prayer In Its Place

By Richard C. Winfield, Editor

A LOT HAS BEEN WRITTEN and said recently about the issue of prayers at public school graduation ceremonies. According to last year's *Lee v. Weisman* Supreme Court decision, such prayers are unconstitutional if they are school-sponsored. But so far the Court has declined to rule on whether such prayers are acceptable if they are student-initiated and student-led.

Some Christians get really upset about this issue and the related issue of school prayer. They can't understand why schools can't continue asking local clergymen to offer prayers at graduations, just as they have done in the past.

Something to think about

But if those Christians lived in Hawaii, they might think differently. There the local "clergyman" might be a Buddhist monk, since Buddhism is the largest faith in that U.S. state. Or how would such Christians react if a Muslim mullah were asked to offer a prayer — not out of the realm of possibility, since Islam will soon be the second largest religion in the U.S.

As Christians, we may not like it when our freedom of religious expression is restricted in the *public arena* in order to protect the rights of those who are not Christians. But that works both ways. The law that protects Jewish schoolchildren from being forced to sit through prayers offered to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ also protects Christian children from having to listen to prayers to Allah in the name of Mohammed, his prophet. In essence, the Constitution is helping us apply the "Golden Rule."

But there is another

issue for us Christians to consider here. And that is that we shouldn't expect our public institutions to do for us what we should be doing in our churches and in our homes.

Rather than get upset about the lack of prayer at public school ceremonies and in classrooms, we need to get upset about the paucity of prayer in our churches. How many Brethren churches still have prayer meetings? And how many people attend the prayer meetings, Bible studies, and share groups that are still held? Less than 20 percent of the membership, according to the 1992 statistical reports.

Are these gatherings poorly attended because the Supreme Court has declared them unconstitutional? Certainly not! Such meetings, held in church buildings or in private homes, are among the most protected gatherings in our land. Ironically, while prayer meetings in our land of freedom are often poorly attended, believers in countries where Christianity is illegal often regard their prayer meetings as very precious and will literally risk their lives to attend.

Prayer in the home

But the church isn't the only place where we need to get serious about prayer. We need to get serious about prayer in our homes as well. We ought to spend time in prayer ourselves. And we must

teach our children how to pray, both by example and by precept.

So what if your kids' teachers can't lead them in prayer before class at school. Pray with them at home. Teach them how to pray. And instruct them that they can pray anytime, anywhere — including at school. For, contrary to some of the jokes we've heard, the Supreme Court has never said that children can't pray at school. It has only declared school-sponsored prayers unconstitutional. There is no law that prevents a school child from bowing his head and offering a silent prayer at the beginning of the day or before a test.

What did Jesus say?

Jesus Himself did not seem to put a lot of importance on public prayer. In fact, quite the contrary, for He said, "But when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men." Granted, He was not speaking about prayers offered at public functions. Nor am I suggesting that such prayers are hypocritical (although I've heard a few I've wondered about!).

Jesus sets forth the place of prayer in the rest of this passage: "When you pray, go into your room ['closet' in the King James Version], close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matt. 6:5-6, *NIV*).

So, rather than spending time bemoaning the demise of prayers at graduation ceremonies or in the classrooms of our public schools, let us commit ourselves, instead, to making greater use of the freedom we have to spend time in prayer in our churches, in our homes, and in the "closets" of our hearts. [†]



THE BRETHREN Evangelist

July/August 1993
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This EVANGELIST is the combined July/August issue, and there will be no issue next month.

Cover: The theme logo for this year's General Conference was done by Robin Roberts, a graphic artist and member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

**Answers to the
Little Crusader page:**

Words in the box: see the box at the right.

What Jesus Wants you to be: Fisher of men.





A Special Call To Prayer

By Jerry R. Flora

“THERE ARE INDICATIONS that, as we approach the twenty-first century, the greatest prayer movement in living memory is already under way.” That is the opinion of Richard J. Foster, the Quaker writer best known for his book, *Celebration of Discipline*. Can it be true? As both observer and leader in the struggle for America’s soul, Dr. Foster’s views deserve consideration.

We are rapidly approaching the 105th General Conference of The Brethren Church. It is possible that more prayer is going into this Conference than any in our last 50 years. The five days in Ashland will begin with special instruction and experience in prayer, led by David Bryant. Noted for his leadership in “concerts of prayer,” he will be helping Brethren to pray

Dr. Flora is professor of New Testament Theology at Ashland Theological Seminary and serves on the Spiritual Formation Commission of The Brethren Church.

with understanding, in greater depth, and to greater effect.

A day of prayer

The Spiritual Formation Commission of General Conference is asking Brethren around the world to set aside Sunday, August 1, as a day of special, concentrated prayer. What could be more appropriate on the Sunday preceding Conference? And on Tuesday evening, August 3, when delegates in Ashland experience the concert of prayer led by David Bryant, Brethren everywhere are invited to spend the same time praying.

A day of fasting

The Spiritual Formation Commission also suggests that Sunday, August 1, be a day of fasting as well as prayer. The goal is to intensify and focus the prayers of Brethren everywhere for the good of the Conference and for the glory of God. The fasting can be done privately or publicly (a group prayer meeting instead of Sunday dinner). It can be as simple as skipping a meal, or it may mean abstaining from food for 24 hours.

Whatever the choice, fasting’s purpose is to take time and energy normally spent on eating and to use that time and energy for purifying prayer instead. The idea is to abstain from food in order to concentrate on God.

Most Brethren have probably

given little attention to such a discipline. Didn’t fasting pass away along with the sacrifices of the Mosaic law? Not quite. Our Lord fasted and assumed that His followers might also, for He said, “When you fast . . .” (Matt. 6:16). The leaders of the Antioch church engaged in worship, fasting, and prayer. Out of that came the missionary movement that sent Paul into Europe with the gospel (Acts 13:1-3).

Many great Christian leaders practiced fasting as part of their spiritual training and testified to its purifying power. Among them were Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, David Brainerd, and Charles Finney. Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, was especially convinced of fasting’s value. He refused to ordain anyone to the ministry who would not fast two days every week.

Our 105th General Conference will make crucial decisions for the future of The Brethren Church. Delegates in Ashland will engage in concerted prayer in the opening days of the Conference. Brethren in other places are asked to join them in praying, and especially on the Sunday preceding Conference. If possible, let that Sunday be a day of fasting in order to pray more and pray better. May the Holy Spirit use this time to enlarge our understanding, enrich our faith, and empower our praying! [†]

Remembering the Children

By Janet Solomon

ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON, May 22, I arrived in Sarasota, Fla., for the dedication service the following day of the church building of Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Hispanic Brethren Church in Sarasota).^{*} I headed immediately for the old migrant camp and the downtown section of Sarasota, where most of the children who first attended the church used to live. As I searched for the children, I became nostalgic.

A small beginning

The ministry began in 1979, while I was finishing college and serving as director of a day-care center for children of Mexican farm laborers. On one occasion a mother asked if I would take her two sons to Sunday school.

On Sunday morning, when I arrived at the migrant camp, not two but ten enthusiastic children greeted me in their Sunday best. In the weeks that followed, these ten soon became 100, requiring three vans to transport them to Sunday school. There they were taught and won to the Lord by caring teachers, including such future Brethren leaders as Miguel Antunez, Juanita Dillard, and Theresa Showalter (now Cruz).

My husband, Tim, soon began a class for adults. Then his father, Rev. Ken Solomon (Brethren missionary to Argentina and Colombia) became the first pastor of this special ministry.

^{*}See the **Update** article about this dedication on page 14.

Mrs. Solomon, a former Brethren missionary to Colombia, South America, now lives in Battle Creek, Michigan, with her husband, Tim, and their two children. She teaches high school Spanish and Bible, and Tim manages a Christian bookstore.



Jan Solomon and Pastor Daniel Rosales with some of the "children" (now young adults) whom Jan brought to the Spanish ministry in Sarasota — (l. to r.) Maria Lazo, Marisol Lazo, Pastor Rosales, José Lazo, Jan, Samuel Peña, Yessenia Ramirez, Juan Peña, Brenda, and Ricardo Peña.

I pondered all this as I pulled into the old neighborhood. No one had planned this church. No mission group had canvassed the area. The Holy Spirit had initiated this work, using only a few small children and a congregation with arms open wide enough to take them in and care for them.

A joyful reunion

At last I reached my destination. There were warm hugs and a few tears. The kids couldn't believe I had come to town just for them. And I couldn't believe how they had grown! Some of the youth have stayed in touch, and a few second generation children have even attended the Spanish church, now under the leadership of Rev. Daniel Rosales and his wife, Kathy. Many of the families, however, have moved around. Some of these young people I had not seen since my husband and I left for Brethren missionary service in Colombia, South America, in 1988!

How happy we were to be together once again! They even asked for cookies, juice, and for a church van to pick them up and take them to church, "just like the good old days."

While some of these young people are still following the Lord, one young man, whom we'll call Raul, had just been released from prison. He informed me that he wouldn't be able to attend the dedication service the next day. "I've got things to do," he said.

"I gave you to the Lord when you were very young," I replied. "He still loves you."

A happy surprise

The hour of the dedication service arrived and the moment came when it was my turn to greet the congregation. Almost as if on cue, Raul walked in the back door and made his way to the second row. I mouthed a "thank you" to him while Kathy Rosales translated
(continued on page 7)

Fit or freedom

By Floyd Faust

This month, as we again celebrate our nation's independence, we need to recommit ourselves to the religious, moral, and educational prerequisites that are the foundation of our freedom.



WAKE UP, AMERICA! Today our citizens are being bombarded with alarming newspaper reports and TV specials informing us of shocking increases in crime, family breakdown, teen-age pregnancy, and the general collapse of our culture. It is evident that our beloved national home, for years the best place on earth to live, is slipping away from us.

Many palliative remedies for specific problems are being proposed, like Band-Aids on a festering wound. But who is openly addressing the primary evil that is spawning most of the others?

A critical struggle

Today our country is engaged in a critical struggle to determine whether any nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to providing freedom for all its people can long endure serious misuse of that freedom by a substantial proportion of its citizens. When respect for moral conduct and obedience to law were nearly universal in our land, our fathers relied on imprisonment of occasional offenders to protect the respectful majority. At present, however, our America

has the largest percentage of its population behind prison bars of any nation in the free world. Even so, violent criminal conduct continues to increase.

The basic problem

The basic problem with our society is evident, but none of our political, economic, or educational leaders are identifying it, turning the spotlight of public attention on it, or championing strong measures for its solution. The destructive evil to which I am referring is "The Sin of the Sixties," the emphasis on civil liberties, individual rights, and freedom of personal expression that led our people to abandon the foundational principles of respect for law, moral restraint, and discipline on which our fathers established this nation.

They wrote, "Religion, Morality and Knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be established." They did not propose merely to grant our people freedom. Other societies had tried that experiment, only to sink so deeply into chaos and confusion that they turned in desperation to civil dictatorships to restore order.

The genius of the American Dream was to set people free only

after they had been made, and as long as they were kept, fit for freedom. Those fathers of ours understood that there are religious, moral, and educational prerequisites to any free society.

Boris Yeltsin is paying a price for his failure to recognize this fact in modern Russia. Eager to establish political and economic freedom for his people, he rejected Gorbachev's plan for slow, long-term democratic reform. That plan would have permitted rebuilding the foundations of personal responsibility and independent decision-making, of religious and moral motivation which must undergird successful democratic government.

A crucial question

An ancient prophet asked, "If the foundations are destroyed, what can a people do?" The Yeltsin regime today is struggling with that question, how to rebuild those infrastructures after they have been deliberately demolished by decades of Communism. In America our peril will be no less traumatic if we permit ours to crumble and decay through neglect.

My own father was a teacher in the "One-Room Country School" that was the support beneath our national character for generations. He said, "We did not teach only the

Rev. Faust is Minister Emeritus of the Broad Street Christian Church of Columbus, Ohio.

"Today our country is engaged in a critical struggle to determine whether any nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to providing freedom for all its people can long endure serious misuse of that freedom by a substantial proportion of its citizens."

'3-R's.' We taught young Americans how to read, write, figure, spell, and how to behave themselves in a civilized society." Moral conduct was given top priority in their curriculum, and discipline was strictly administered and respected "under God," for Bible-reading and prayer were part of the regular daily schedule.

But today? What would have been our grandparents' reaction if we had told them the time would come in their beloved America when not only would mention of God or religion be banished from our schools, but even sexual abstinence before marriage by young people could not be promoted as a preferred option?

Have the "constitutional rights" of the amoral and immoral among us become so important that we dare not teach morality to our younger generation for fear of offending them? And perhaps most important, does the fact that we now have multiple religions in our society mean we must advocate and promote no religion at all, practically fostering secularism? Do we dare to pretend we can achieve a moral society without a religious foundation, a task no other world culture ever accom-

plished and at which Communism recently failed so miserably?

Wake up, America, indeed! If we do not change our goals and efforts, do we believe we will escape being buried under the same searing cinders that wiped out Sodom and Gomorrah? This is no casual call to curb minor social ills plaguing us. It is a trumpet blast appealing for rebuilding our foundation of "Religion, Morality and Knowledge" — that these character-sustaining pursuits be given major emphasis and once again be taught openly and vigorously in our homes, schools, and churches.

An American nightmare

Surely, if we ignore this essential responsibility today, we will become tomorrow a society of terrified prisoners, and our streets, business places, and even our houses will be turned into besieged fortresses. Ours has long been "The land of the free and the home of the brave." But if we do not dem-



onstrate more bravery in teaching our people to accept moral restraints under God and from within our own minds and spirits, we like many before us will come to abhor the freedom that is destroying us, turn to dictatorship to discipline us from without, and see our American Dream become a nightmare.

This is the essential problem facing our nation today. Let us hereby resolve that as we struggle to keep our people free, we give equal priority to doing all that will insure that they are made and kept Fit for Freedom! [†]

Remembering the Children

(continued from page 5)

one of my sentences from Spanish into English.

After the dedication, Raul pulled me aside and told me that he had wanted to come forward when the invitation was given during the service. Soon, not only Raul but five others as well were huddled in prayer with Pastor Rosales, Dr. J.D. Hamel (my father), and me. For me, this second "dedication service" was even more moving than the first had been.

My father and I had breakfast with Raul the following day, before my flight home. And since my return, I have spoken with a

couple of the other Hispanic young people by phone.

I am well aware of the struggles they face. Resources are being developed and jobs are being sought for them. But breaking out of the cycle of their past is a difficult task for some of these young people. Although many have made wise choices for their lives, others have not. Some of the young people have police records. A few of those we used to bring to Sunday school even have been involved in illegal drug trade.

Are these the kind of people Brethren want in their churches? In many congregations, the children I brought might not have been welcome, particularly in the

numbers that came. (We had 201 present for our seventh anniversary celebration, and we once took 51 young people and children on a cruise ship for a day.) But the people of the Sarasota First Brethren Church never asked me to stop bringing them, nor did they complain much about the extra noise (not to mention the gum!). The Sarasota First Brethren Church ministered biblically to the needs of the hurting community around them, and the fruits of their labor have multiplied.

But lest even *one* of these should perish, please continue to pray for *all* our children. And may God bless you, Brethren, for your faithfulness. [†]

How Should Christians Respond to the Homosexual Movement?

By Robert Westfall

ON APRIL 25 an event took place in Washington, D.C., that was heralded as a mainstream gathering and “a simple matter of justice.” The event was the gay march on Washington. President Clinton, meanwhile, is attempting to keep a campaign promise to lift the ban on gays in the military.

It seems that everywhere we turn today we are faced with the issue of homosexuality. How are we, as Christians, to respond to the homosexual movement in America? Is homosexuality an alternate life style?

A twofold response

The Christian response should be twofold. First, we should take a stand against the practice of homosexuality. Homosexual conduct is wrong and strictly forbidden according to the Bible. God said, “If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable” (Leviticus 20:13, *NIV*).

The Apostle Paul put it this way, “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, *NIV*).

The Scriptures are clear. Homosexual conduct is wrong. It is not an alternate life style in the eyes of God. It is detestable in His sight.

Secondly, we should stand next

to the person who is a homosexual. We must be careful to condemn only the practice and not the people. Those who commit homosexual acts are not to be feared, ridiculed, or hated. They are to be loved with the unconditional, un-failing love that only Christ can produce in our lives.

“The church should be a haven of forgiveness and healing for repentant homosexuals without compromising its stance against homosexual behavior.”

All of us have a sin nature and are prone to yield to one temptation more than to another one. Some of us have more difficulty with sexual temptation than do others. Some have more difficulty with stealing or with outbursts of anger or with lying to get out of a jam than other people have. Our tendency toward a certain sinful behavior may be caused by psychological, accidental, environmental, or constitutional (genetic or hormonal) factors. But all of these tendencies, including the homosexual condition, are innocent until indulged.

Temptation itself is not sin

Temptation itself is not sin. Rather, yielding to the temptation is sin. The Lord Jesus Christ was “tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15, *NIV*).

The person with homosexual tendencies must struggle with his or her temptation just as the heterosexual person must struggle to maintain sexual purity. Just as a parent who has a tendency to let his or her anger build up inside

must struggle with the tendency to let it explode into physically and/or emotionally abusing a mate or child. Just as a person must struggle with temptations to steal. Just as . . .

The solution is not to make the sinful behavior to which we are tempted an alternate life style. We wouldn't even think of suggesting that child abusing be an alternate life style, would we? Then why do some think that homosexuality should be an alternate life style?

God sets the standards

God declares that both are wrong. He knows what is best for us. We must trust God's word. We must do what His word says is right no matter how we feel or how reasonable society makes sinful behavior seem. Society does not set the standards for morality. God does.

The solution is for Christians to take a stand against homosexual practices and to stand next to the homosexual person. Paul goes on in 1 Corinthians chapter six to say, “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:11, *NIV*).

Some of the Christians at Corinth had been practicing homosexuals, thieves, drunkards, etc. But when they turned away from their sin, turned to Jesus and placed their faith in Him, they were forgiven and given new life. Homosexuals can be forgiven and their lives transformed. We should stand next to the homosexual, demonstrating through our words and deeds the love of Christ. The church should be a haven of forgiveness and healing for repentant homosexuals without compromising its stance against homosexual behavior. [†]

Rev. Westfall is pastor of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church. This article appeared in the Pleasant Hill Church newsletter and is used here with Rev. Westfall's permission.

The 105th General Conference of The Brethren Church

WITNESSES
TO THE
WORLD

Acts 1:8

August 2–6 at Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio

The Conference schedule and an introduction to the inspirational speaker were included in last month's EVANGELIST. On this and the following several pages is additional information about this 105th annual meeting of the Brethren.

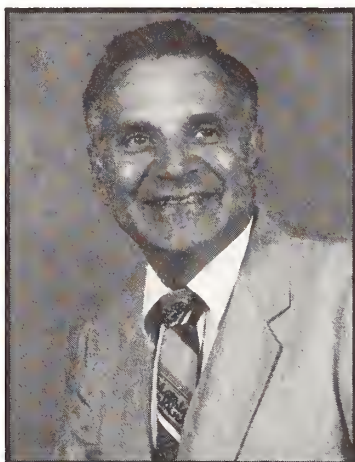
Brethren attending Conference this year are in for a pleasant surprise when they walk into the Convocation Center, for the meeting and banquet rooms have been completely remodeled. A dropped ceiling, tasteful decorating, new lighting, carpeted floors, and a new sound system should enhance our enjoyment of Conference.

Conference Moderator

Rev. Glenn W. Grumbling, pastor of the College Corner Brethren Church near Wabash, Ind., will preside at this year's General Conference. Moderator Grumbling will present an address to the Conference during the Wednesday evening worship hour and preside over the daily business sessions.

A native of Johnstown, Pa., where he grew up in the Johnstown Third Brethren Church, Grumbling (62) attended both Ashland College (B.A., 1955) and Ashland Theological Seminary (B.D., 1958). While in seminary he pastored the United Church of North Fairfield, Ohio, and following seminary he served the Milford First, College Corner (an earlier pastorate), Muncie First, Waterloo First, and Mt. Olivet (Georgetown, Del.) Brethren Churches prior to entering his present pastorate in 1988.

He is married to the former Nancy M. Thomas, and they are the parents of four children, Wayne (also a pastor), Rebecca (Muñoz) (deceased), Thomas, and Cheryl (Black). They also have eight grandchildren.



and a picture of David Bryant were included in the June issue (p. 11).

Devotional/Corporate Prayer services. Half-hour periods for devotions and prayer are planned for 8:30 to 9:00 on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. In keeping with the primary emphasis of this Conference, priority will be given to spending time in prayer in these services.

World Relief Soup Luncheon. The focus at this Thursday noon luncheon will be on how we can help feed others rather than on feeding ourselves. The speaker will be David Loudon, Disaster Response Director for World Relief of NAE, who will provide up-to-date information about the challenge of meeting world needs. (*Reservations are requested, using the form on p. 13 of the June issue.*)

Missionary Board Banquet. Thursday evening will be missions night at Conference, with a Missionary Board Banquet at 5:15 followed by a missions program at 7:00. Speaker for the seven o'clock program will be Brethren missionary Rev. Raymond Aspinall. Rev. Aspinall and his wife, Marilyn, are retiring from mission service this summer following 31 years of work in Argentina. The title of Rev. Aspinall's message will be, "What? Are You Still Talking About Missions?" (*Reservations are required for the banquet, but the evening program is open to all.*)

New Moderator's Challenge. During the concluding Conference worship service at 10:45 Friday morning, Rev. Russell Gordon, the 1994 Conference moderator, will bring a challenge related to next year's Conference theme. Since 1989 Rev. Gordon has served as Director of Home Missions and Church Growth for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church. Prior to 1989 he pastored churches in Bradenton, Fla; Fort Scott, Kans; and Williamstown, Ohio.

Other Highlights of Conference Week

David Bryant, founder and president of Concerts of Prayer International, will address the Conference on Monday evening, present a prayer workshop on Tuesday morning, then lead a concert of prayer on Tuesday evening. More information

General Conference Auxiliaries

Woman's Missionary Society, Brethren Men of Mission, and National Association of Brethren Church Elders sessions during General Conference are scheduled for 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, and 1:30 p.m. Thursday. In addition, a luncheon for the women and a picnic for the men are planned for noon Wednesday. (*Reservations for these meals should be made using the Conference registration form included in the June issue.*)

Woman's Missionary Society

"Witnessing With Power" will be the theme for the Woman's Missionary Society Conference sessions. Charlene Rowser will present devotions related to this theme at each session. Sandra Medsger will serve as song leader and Marjorie Bennett as pianist.

The Tuesday morning session will feature a message by National W.M.S. President Shirley Black. It will also include greetings from missionaries and special music from the New Lebanon W.M.S.

Back by popular request for the luncheon on Wednesday will be Suzanne Barr of Mansfield, Ohio. Women who attended the W.M.S. luncheon at the 1988 Conference and heard Ms. Barr's hilarious account, "Suzy Kay Goes to Conference," will look forward to hearing her presentation this year—"Suzy Kay Returns to Conference." Special music for the luncheon will be presented by April Lowmaster, and the Nappanee Society will be in charge of receiving the project offering.

Election of officers and other business will be conducted Wednesday afternoon. The session will also include special music by Jill and Kevin VanDuyne and a memorial service led by the Central District.

During the Thursday afternoon session, the Thank Offering will be received, with the Sarasota W.M.S. in charge. The session will also include special music by Joan Ronk and the installation of officers. (*See page 3 of The Woman's Outlook Newsletter in the center of this issue for more information about the W.M.S. Conference sessions.*)

Brethren Church Elders

During their Tuesday session, elders will have an opportunity to hear, and perhaps ask questions of, David Bryant, the General Conference speaker.

At noon on Wednesday, the elders are invited to join the Brethren Men of Mission for a picnic at Ashland Theological Seminary. No elders' session

is planned on Wednesday following the picnic.

On Thursday afternoon the elders will hold their election of officers, hear pastors' conference reports and other reports, and conduct other business. Time will also be given for memorials to elders who have passed away in recent months. (Elders are asked to bring these in writing.)

Brethren Men of Mission

The Men of Mission will concentrate on business during their Tuesday session. A visit to the Flora Archaeological Center is planned following the picnic on Wednesday. And in addition to finishing business during the Thursday session, the men will also receive reports of their 1992 work projects at the Gretna Brethren Church, Northview Brethren Life, and Riverside Christian School. Final details of the Men of Mission sessions were not yet available at press time.

Conference Workshops

Five workshops are planned for this year's General Conference. David Bryant, will lead a workshop Tuesday morning at 8:30 for the entire Conference body on the subject of prayer. This will be in preparation for the concert of prayer that Bryant will lead on Tuesday evening.

Four additional workshops, as follows, are scheduled for Tuesday afternoon at 3:15:

Planning Your Retirement Years and Beyond, led by Paul Ditlevson and sponsored by Ashland Theological Seminary. This workshop is aimed at helping individuals plan for their retirement years through wills, trusts, and life income agreements.

Spiritual Wellness: The Journey Toward Wholeness, led by Carolyn Cooksey and Dr. Jerry Flora and sponsored by the Spiritual Formation Commission of The Brethren Church. This workshop will inform and inspire those who attend concerning the spiritual disciplines and a life of prayer.

Developing Evangelistic Leaders Through Evangelism Explosion, led by Ken and Pam Ingold and sponsored by the Leadership Development Commission of The Brethren Church. The goal of this workshop is to demonstrate effective ways in which lay people can witness to others.

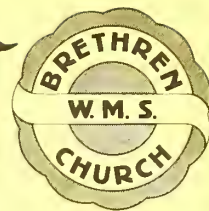
Models for Planting New Brethren Churches, chaired by Dr. Dale Stoffer and sponsored by the New Church Development Commission of The Brethren Church. Several Brethren leaders will present models they have used or are planning to use in starting new Brethren churches.

A Conference Extra

A "timeout" will be called at 11:15 a.m. of the Wednesday business session for Conference attendees to go to Ashland Theological Seminary for a special event. At 11:30 a.m. the seminary will dedicate the Flora Archaeological Center in honor of Dr. Delbert Flora, retired professor and dean of the seminary, and his wife Romaine.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



July-August 1993

Volume 6, Number 6

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

It's Springtime! The beautiful rays of the sun shine in through our windows. As welcome as the warming rays are, nevertheless, they show the winter's accumulation of dirt. Today we do not have to go through the ordeal of "spring cleaning," as our mothers and grandmothers did. It was a time of "turning out rooms" and general upheaval as the first sunny day of springtime arrived. Warm sunny days still give some of us the urge to wash windows, so we can see the sunshine at its fullest. I remember when I was a young bride — come spring and sunshine, and I was ready to clean from "top to bottom." Now it's done as I "get around to it."

Springtime might be a good time for "spiritual" housecleaning. We all have things we can "clean up" or "get rid of" in our individual lives. Galatians 5:16 tells us to "live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature." As we read on, we see listed the acts of the sinful nature. These sins are all too obvious to the world. Often they hinder our testimony. We often say "we are only human" and go on being a stumbling block. Let's not defend ourselves, but instead welcome the sunlight of God's gaze upon us and get on with our spiritual housecleaning, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Dave and Diane Kerner and their 3 children have arrived safely in the States. I look forward to seeing them at National Conference in August, and I trust you will want to be there, too.

Don't forget, we will have five missionary families at Conference this year. You will not want to miss the chance to visit with all of them.

It will soon be time for individual WMS groups to send in your reports to the general secretary, Grace Grumblin. After she compiles all the information, she will send her report to the National Offices in Ashland to be printed in the program booklet for Conference. Every year we must wait for a
(continued on page 4)

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

by Polly Benshoff

Text: "But let it (adorning) be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."
I Peter 3:4

How important labels have become! Clothing labels, food labels, just everything we purchase has a label. That is good. However, God has a life plan, a direction for us, a way to live that is labeled the "Christian life." He has made every provision to bring His Plan about, yet we don't yield ourselves to Him and consequently cannot live the abundant life.

Every Christian should manifest the fullness of the Holy Spirit in his or her life. We are commanded to be under His control continually. Paul admonishes us to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit. If we carry out this admonition, a significant change will occur in our hearts that will be evident to others.

Two ladies who worked in an office together used to wear little pins which, they said, "told the world they were Christians." "Well," another lady who worked with them said of herself, "I don't wear pins, but I know the Bible says I became the possessor of the Holy Spirit at the time I received Christ into my heart. And I pray that the 'pin' of my life will always clearly show forth His presence and power." That's where the "filling" should be evident — in our daily actions, words, and attitudes.

Galatians 5 reminds us that love produced by the Holy Spirit (not self-effort) — joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, faith, meekness and self-control — are the qualities that tell others we are Christians. Every Christian needs the admonition of I Peter 3:4, "that we possess a meek and quiet spirit." If we carry out this admonition, a significant change will occur in our lives and hearts, so much so that it will be evident to others.

What happens when one really hears the gospel and believes it, taking

Jesus into your heart? Ephesians 1:13 says, "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." It is the stamp of God upon our life that designates it as "God's property." So our life is not our own, nor our body our own. We've been purchased by Jesus' blood and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Seeing then that the Holy Spirit's presence is within us, we know He will produce fruit and that fruit *will be* noticed by those with whom we live and work.

We all fall short of a maximum yield of spiritual fruit and, for that reason, we must lean heavily upon God's Word. Study it, read it, read it, study it until it becomes a part of our talk, our thinking (mind), and our very life sustenance.

It takes perseverance and will-power. We must engage in these spiritual exercises, if we intend for our lives to show forth His presence within.

Our life is given us to bring praise and glory to Christ, to honor and worship Him. You don't advertise your religion by wearing a label. You do it by living a life! Galatians 5:25 reminds us, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Prayer: Our heavenly Father, we praise Thee for Thy care and Thy blessings. In every circumstance Thy presence within us and around us has helped us. When we are weak, Thy strength has made us strong. When we are discouraged, Thou hast strengthened our faith. You know our needs and Thy Spirit guides us to be content and thankful for Your goodness. Strengthen us with might by Thy Spirit in the inner man. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

District Doings

The MATHIAS Church in West Virginia hosted the Southeastern District Conference April 24. Mary Garver, WMS district vice president, presided and reported that Jean Shank led the ladies in a Concert of Prayer which was very meaningful. The ladies adopted a new goal, which is to sponsor a monthly missionary emphasis for the entire church. This goal has good potential: it will emphasize the mission outreach of the entire denomination, inform the church about the specific mission fields, and indirectly "advertise" the local society. Their offering for the The Mountain View Church in Frederick, Maryland, completed this 2-year project. The new project is the church in Krypton, Kentucky, where Jim and Lois Sluss serve. The local congregation is working on church renovation.

The TUCSON societies hosted the district rally in January. The salad luncheon was attended by 32 ladies. Their student aid offering was designated for Karen Robins, a member of the Tucson church attending Ashland University.

Linda Marshall Findley from Casa Grande, Arizona, was the speaker for the rally. Following her graduation from college at the age of 19 with three degrees, she became a Christian. When she was 23, she worked in a leprosy hospital in Africa. Being very lonely, she began deep Bible study, then returned to the US. Through many difficult circumstances, she clung closely to God. Circumstances such as one husband who was emotionally distressed and committed suicide, a second husband who died suddenly from a heart attack, and finally her present husband. They have a blended family of six children, ages 5-12. What an inspirational speaker!

The spring rally of the Ohio Miami Valley was held Saturday, April 17, at the GRATIS Brethren Church. Carolyn Boomershire reported that 32 ladies were registered. Assorted home-made cookies and beverages were given during registration.

Ruth Focht, the Gratis president, welcomed the ladies and read the Love scripture, I Corinthians 13. Lucille Brandenburg was the song leader and Janell Kiracofe accompanied the group singing. A puzzle was given to each lady to complete and microwave cook-books were given to the 3 winners.

The Stanze family (Don, the father, and daughters Becky, Debbie, and Melanie) sang several numbers. The

Gratis Homemakers Club showed ideas for gift wrapping from scraps (paper, ribbons, etc.) for all seasons. It was original and very easy to do.

Patti Bub, the Ohio district president, conducted the business meeting and Lucille Brandenburg gave the blessing for the meal.

The afternoon entertainment was the Preble County Pride Cloggers; their leaders are Kenny and Donna Smith, members of the Gratis church. People of all ages danced.

The MANSFIELD WALCREST WMS ladies hosted the Northeast Ohio rally in April. This was a big undertaking, since, until recently, the society was inactive.

We were welcomed with donuts and beverages and soft taped background music.

The day's theme was Women's Wellness, and so the folders of information we received when we registered contained information for the day — the program, song sheets, appropriate poems, and a pad for note-taking.

Sherrie Gordon and Marty Weaver from the Garber Brethren Church played the organ and piano prelude and Marty accompanied the hymn singing. Dianne Brown, the Walcrest president, welcomed the ladies and called the roll of societies. In response, activities of each society were given: toy party with all gifts going to Riverside Christian School, an auction and a Tupperware party, sale of homemade apple dumplings, sewing for nursing homes, a sunshine box for a shut-in, and a Joseph's robe project (sewing money in pockets). Both the North Georgetown and the Williamstown churches are celebrating their 100th anniversaries. North Georgetown is making a quilt, using a block from each church family.

Devotions were given by Sally Nelson and the ladies ensemble sang several special hymns. Sherrie Gordon reviewed helpful books from The Carpenter's Shop and suggested augmenting your church library with books that help.

Time was available after the buffet luncheon to browse the book table, have your blood pressure checked, and to visit. The afternoon speakers were introduced by Dianne. Physical wellness was the topic of Dorothy Tasman from Mansfield General Hospital; Suzanne Barr, an investigator with Children's Services, spoke on Emotional Wellness; and Carolyn Cooksey, a recent graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary, spoke on Spiritual Well-

ness. It was important to see how these facets of a person are linked and affect our being when one is out of balance. An informative question and answer period concluded their presentation.

Patti Bubb, the district president, received the project offering, which was designated for Tim and Jan Eagle's expenses. The offering amounted to \$615.

Esther Metzler wrote of the benevolent work from the SARASOTA society. They contribute for kitchen supplies for the new church kitchen; and each month send many soup labels to Riverside Christian School; visits and food to the shut-ins and in February valentines and bookmarks. They contributed food to the Sarasota All-Faiths food bank, and supplied food for those who went to Homestead to work after the hurricane. One of the helpers was from the Sarasota society. The ladies help in the church office and clean the Sunday school rooms weekly. They give a rosebud and card to the WMS ladies who experience illness or a death in their family.

Across the country to TUCSON, Marie Fanning sends greetings from the Southwest District. The societies sponsor spring and fall rummage sales and use the proceeds for camp projects and scholarships. The Faith, Hope, and Charity society sends monthly support for an Indian evangelist and the E.V.E. society supports an Indian orphan girl. The leader for the month writes to the Missionary of the Month; their responses are interesting, informative, and appreciated. Shirley Black, the national president, accompanied Jim for the Missionary Conference and met with the ladies.

The POWER society at NORTHWEST Church sponsored a parking lot sale for their church projects.

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

Published bimonthly in January, March, May, July, September, and November by the Woman's Missionary Society of The Brethren Church.

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Ashland, Ohio 44805

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Woman's Outlook Newsletter

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER CELEBRATIONS

From the Mary and Martha Society at the BETHLEHEM Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Susan Kidd wrote about the special visitor who attended their Mother-Daughter get together. The guest was Lydia, seller of purple, who challenged the ladies to be used wherever they are, at home, work, or elsewhere.

From HUNTINGTON, Indiana, Roxie Stahl reported. Saturday morning, May 8, 50 mothers, daughters, and guests enjoyed a brunch and the program that was presented by Kelly Greene, of Holland, Michigan. Kelly attended the Huntington Church when she was a child.

A graduate of Ball State University with a major in speech and theater, Kelly's experiences with university and community theater, coupled with her enthusiasm and natural talent, delighted her audience. She accompanied herself on the guitar while sharing songs and stories, including "Desert Pete," two King Solomon stories, "The Baker's Bread" and "Old Joe and the Carpenter." Other songs were "Standing on the Promises," "There ought to be a Hall of Fame for Mothers," her original "Mamma Lise," and "The Arrow and the Bow."

Pat Lusch and Marjorie Teusch, mother and daughter, sang a duet. Mother and daughter responses by Carol Oliver and her daughters, Jenny and Dianna Gurtner, were enjoyed.

"Stages of a Woman," a clever presentation of flowering plants, was given by Wanda Armantrout, Marjorie Teusch, and Dianna Gurtner, program committee members.

The hot pink petunia centerpieces were awarded to eight guests; favors were original refrigerator magnets designed with a message of God's love.

The Mother and Daughter dinner at ASHLAND Park Street carried the theme "Christian Pattern for Living." Following the dinner served by the men, the program was in Karen's Fabric Shop, usually called the sanctuary.

The program was the "instruction sheet" inside the cleverly designed pattern envelope, although Shirley Black, the pattern mistress, introduced each "piece" of the pattern. Original mother and daughter poems were given by Gaylene and Daria Kennelly; DeAnn and Geneva Oburn sang a duet, and Katrina Satterfield played a flute solo accompanied by her mother, Sarah Fisher.

The skit in Karen's Fabric Shop was given by Karen Little, proprietor, and

July-August 1993

Laura Mae Riffle and Alberta Holsinger, customers. The stage resembled a "real" store with wall hangings and many bolts of fabric. As the customers shopped and were inspired by bolts of old fabrics, they reminisced about those who had touched and influenced their lives: parents, teachers at school and in church, and neighbors.

The program concluded with the original poem "Pattern for Living" by Alberta Holsinger. The committee included ladies from the three societies.

Pattern For Living

Father God, your perfect pattern I see
For Christian living all around me.

In the vast, spacious expanse of sky,
In the sun of day, the stars of night,
In the happy songs of birds nearby,
In the scents and colors of flowers
bright,

Lord God, You are surely there.

Your pattern is everywhere.

In a teacher's quiet way of life,
In a friend's reassuring embrace,
In the calm manner of a preacher's
wife,

In a mother's tender, loving face,

Lord God, You are surely there.

Your pattern is everywhere.

In the honest ways our loved ones
trod,

In a father's commitment to family,
In a grandfather's covenant with God,
In a child's promise to faithful be,

Lord God, You are surely there.

Your pattern is everywhere.

In the outright acceptance by kin,
In a grandmother's complete devotion,
In the joy and peace I feel within,
In my Savior's love without condition,

Lord God, You are surely there.

Your pattern is everywhere.

Alberta Holsinger

April 1993

A Preview of the WMS Conference

1. The meetings will be Tuesday, 11-12; Wednesday, 2:30-4:30; Thursday, 1:30-3:00.

2. The luncheon is Wednesday, 12:30-2:30; the cost is \$6.75. Suzy Kay returns to Conference, so be prepared to laugh.

3. District presidents will receive devotional books and membership lists for each society. Local presidents are asked to correct that same list and return it with your dues to Joanne Kroft, 608 Twp. Road 1151, RD 5, Ashland, Ohio 44805. This method seems so efficient, we wonder why we didn't think of it sooner!

Missionary Miscellany

Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar of India are grandparents! Shanthi and her husband, Vincent Edwin, had a baby girl March 26 and named her Shirley-na, after "Aunt" Shirley Black.

Another new missionary baby is Amy Giselle Fuentes, born May 4 to Mario and Laura Fuentes of the Centro Cristiano Para La Familia, in Pasadena, California.

The Eagles and Ruggles have moved to Mexico City and are anxious to be about the Lord's ministry in that great city. Anticipate exciting reports from them as well as the Kerners, Aspinalls, and Bill Winter at General Conference. Sharon Winter will be in school in Tucson and unable to attend Conference.

Continue to pray for Allen Baer, who assumes greater responsibilities in Argentina, since the Aspinalls and Winters are in the States.

Give your prayers and support to Daniel and Kathy Rosales in Sarasota. The growth of the Hispanic congregation is amazing.

In 1991 they began to use the Sarasota Brethren Church, since their former building was too small. And they continued to grow!

This spring they purchased a church building which is officially The Hispanic Brethren Church in Sarasota, Florida. Pray for these Brethren, pastored by Daniel.

Part of their outreach is a day care center at this site. Pray, also, for more parents to enroll their children and for the staff.

At this time, details are indefinite for the future plans of Aspinalls and Winters. Continue to uphold them in your prayers.

4. There will be no quilt to be quilted, but there will be an auction of a 9-patch quilt, which the Berlin, Pennsylvania, society made, and tote bags.

5. The project offering will be received during the luncheon. Remember it is for the girls' orphanage in India. This completes the second year for the orphanage.

6. The thank offering will be received Thursday and is designated for benevolences: world and home missions, campus ministry, Riverside Christian School, and a scholarship for a young woman attending Ashland University.

READING CIRCLE BOOKS

At the May board meeting, the WMS executive committee recommended the following list of books for your reading during 1993-94. We suggest you read a minimum of two books for Christian growth. The books will be available at General Conference.



Devotional

GOD CAME NEAR by Max Lucado; \$8.99

A fresh and wonderful look at the life of the Savior. A book that is not just another volume of information about the life of Christ, but one that brings you into an encounter with the Master Himself.

Christian Novel

WHATEVER TOMORROW BRINGS by Lori Wick; \$6.99

Nostalgic fiction at its best. Will Katlin recognize God's unexpected gift of love? Can she trust Him in all things?

Christian Concerns

GENTLY TOUCH by Hilda Stahl; \$6.99

Tackling one of today's most emotional issues, Hilda Stahl writes of a young woman, abused and battered, coming to grips with her bitterness and, in the process, learning to love again and to forgive.

GOD'S LOST CHILDREN by Sister Mary Rose McGeady; \$4.00

The shocking story of America's homeless kids.

Early Christians

MOSES by Lillian Cantleberry; \$5.95

A fast-moving and fascinating biography of a very significant biblical man.

Christian Living

GOD HAPPENED TO BE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD by Ken Jones; \$8.99

God loves to walk in your neighborhood and mine. He always has. God is always interested in touching, talking to, and interacting with His creations.

GIFTED HANDS by Ben Carson with Cecil Murphey; \$5.99

The inspiring story of an intercity kid with poor grades and little motivation who, at age 33, became director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University Hospital.

Missions

BORDEN OF YALE by Mrs. Howard Taylor; \$3.99

His arrival in Egypt in 1913 was

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

My mailbox has welcomed lots of letters from you this spring and I am glad to share the information with you. I hope you get some good ideas from other societies which you can use in your group. If you want more information, contact the local president listed in the January-February Newsletter. Addresses are in the Directory issue.

Do you ever really look at your key ring? For more than finding the correct key needed for a specific purpose?

On my key ring are keys for the house, office, the car door and tailgate, a disc indicating my blood type, and a small silver-colored cross. I keep my keys in the side pocket of my purse, automatically dropping them in or pulling them out as needed.

This spring I was aware one morning the "thing" that I had in my hand as I took the keys from my purse was the cross. This occurred five consecutive mornings. I think nothing of it when I regularly pull out the gimmick from the dealer on my key ring, but the cross was different.

This was significant. For several months I have had three specific

(continued from first column)

tragically marked by his contracting cerebral meningitis. His untimely death at 25 was covered by every newspaper in the United States as a testimony for Christ.

Near the WMS reading table will be other very good books by Jim Black and Julie and Jerry Flora. A few WMS reading circle books from other years and former Sisterhood of Mary and Martha books may be purchased at reduced costs.

President's Pen (continued)

few late reports, but this year we hope you will send your report in on time, so our booklets are ready for Conference. If you want your group listed, please send your report in by June 30 to Grace, 114 Cambridge Road, Johnstown, PA 15905. We do appreciate your cooperation.

Anticipate a spiritually filled General Conference. David Bryant will be the guest speaker and will instruct in and conduct the Concerts of Prayer.

I look forward to seeing you at Conference in August.

In Christian Love,
Shirley Black

prayer concerns. One answer is still on hold, the second is being answered "yes" slowly, and the third — that decision was being made that week when I held the cross in my hand. I was sure the Lord and I were on the same wavelength.

But, at the end of the week, the answer was no.

I was disappointed. However, the cross in my hand reminded me that the Lord is in control of my day and of those decisions which are so important. And I remembered, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" Romans 8:28. Not only the decision that was made that day, but *all* things.

I can see only a very short distance compared with God's vision *ad infinitum*. I know there is something better than what I wanted. God *is* in control and I'm thankful.

It's time to evaluate your society's accomplishments for the year. It's a good time to see areas where you are weak and make plans now for more diligence next year. WMS is not governed by rigid rules, but simple ABC's are suggested for spiritual growth for yourself and for your society. The goals are guidelines for assuming responsibility within the church and within the denomination. In this group you can help World Relief, home and foreign missions, educational interests such as Riverside Christian School, the Seminary, Campus Ministry, and a young woman at Ashland University. Opportunities for service at home are unlimited. Share this time with others.

When groups meet within your church for a Bible study or for craft work, invite them to join you and learn from them. Share your joy in the Lord. The purpose is to strengthen the church, both locally, denominationally, and around the world.

The theme for next year's WMS study is "Living for Jesus." Jan Sullivan invited people living around the world to write the studies. They will be interesting.

Have you stopped to think where in the world is WMS? In Argentina, Colombia, India, Malaysia, and across the United States. By being a member, you are joining your world-wide sisters. What a wonderful family!

Your friend,

A stylized, handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan".

Joan

General Conference Business

Major items of business for this year's General Conference will include the following:

- Election of officers and committees (see list of nominees on following page). Nominations from the floor will be received on Tuesday afternoon, and the election will be held Wednesday morning.
- Three General Conference Executive Council recommendations (see below). Discussion of these recommendations is scheduled for Wednesday morning.
- Discussion of "How Brethren Understand the Bible," prepared by the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication. This discussion is scheduled for Thursday morning. (Delegates are urged to request a copy of this document, which was sent to pastors and other church leaders with the June 4 *Leadership Letter*.)

General Conference Executive Council Recommendations

Recommendation 1 — National Office Organization and Finances

Background

The Brethren Church, Inc., is facing a serious financial challenge. GCEC has adopted a working budget for 1993 that includes a projected loss of over \$40,000. We anticipate growing deficits in future years.

Since 1984, giving by churches and individuals has held steady, averaging about 69% of full support. Increases in the fair share support figure (presently \$31 per Church Growth Index unit, last increased in 1992 from \$29) have generated more money but not an increase in the percentage of full support given. We recognize that the small size of many Brethren churches (one-half averaged 62 or less in worship attendance in 1992) limits the amount of financial support they can reasonably be expected to provide.

Fortunately, we have experienced a low inflation rate during these years. But the value of the dollars given is steadily decreasing. So, while we are receiving about the same dollar amount of financial support each year, those dollars do not go as far toward meeting expenses.

During the three years since the merger of several cooperating boards with The Brethren Church, we have been able to nearly balance our operating budget each year (only .7% total operating loss for 1990-1992). This has been possible through careful spending and limiting our ministry (the one exception being the three-year evangelism process, *Passing On the Promise*, which begins this year). Since 1976, we have reduced both the executive level staff and total full-time staff in the Brethren Church National Office (and the equivalent former cooperating boards) by 40%.

GCEC has studied two solutions to this financial dilemma — increasing support and decreasing expenses.

One approach to increasing support would be to increase the fair share support figure. An increase of \$6-9 per Church Growth Index unit would be required to cover the anticipated shortfall for 1994. But we believe any increase, and particularly such a large one, would have a negative impact on many Brethren churches that are already strug-

gling just to get by financially during tight economic times.

Another approach to raising support is to begin a concerted planned giving emphasis (including current and deferred gifts). While that would offer valuable long-term advantage and will be investigated, it would not benefit soon enough to solve our short-term problems.

The alternative to raising income is to cut expenses. In maintaining a nearly balanced budget the past few years, we have pruned everything possible short of eliminating major programs and personnel.

The Brethren Church has some reserves to cover a budget deficit. However, if we continue on our present course, we estimate that our reserves will be exhausted by the end of 1995. We feel it would be poor stewardship to needlessly delay action to correct this financial situation.

Therefore, we are recommending several actions that will result in a downsizing of the Brethren Church National Office. Considering these proposed reductions has been painful to us. Many denominations today are experiencing similar financial difficulties and are downsizing national operations. But we feel the impact deeply because of our small size and the kinship we feel with our national staff.

The time has come to take bold steps to address these financial concerns. We recognize that, through enactment of these changes, we may not be able to accomplish all that we might hope for during the short term. However, we believe the proposals will allow us to do the most important things — to maintain our unity and vision as a denomination and to keep us working together toward the priorities to which God has called us. At the same time, we believe these proposals are fiscally sound and will make us more faithful stewards of the resources God has provided us.

Details of the Recommendation

Therefore, we recommend that the following proposals be fully implemented by September 1, 1994:

1. The Brethren Church employ only one full-time executive to lead the church and manage the national office.

This executive would take the place of the three present executive level positions: Director of Pastoral Ministries, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, and Editor of Pub-

lications. A timetable for employing the new executive and bringing to conclusion the work of present executives is in the process of being established.

Responsibilities of the new executive would include:

a. Giving visionary leadership to the church and leading us corporately toward fulfilling our present and future priorities;

b. Leading Brethren Church ministries and managing the national office;

c. Coordinating pastoral care ministries and congregational relations (see #2 below);

d. Directing communications for the church, including THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST.

The Brethren Church has in the past employed a single executive for the national office. While having one executive does not offer the diversity of staffing we might desire, it would cover our most immediate needs. We are committed to continuing some ministries (such as Passing on the Promise, World Relief, National BYIC, and the Crusader Program) and national office services. We will be reviewing these as well to make them as effective and efficient as possible.

2. Primary responsibility for pastoral care and pastoral/congregational relations be redirected to the districts.

Districts would be encouraged to establish a district elder position (similar to Indiana or Midwest districts) or a regional elder (jointly with other districts) to do the on-site tasks of the present DPM. Responsibilities of the present DPM that would be assigned to the executive proposed in part 1 include:

a. Coordinating the work of district/regional elders and an annual retreat for them;

b. Recruiting suitable persons for pastoral ministry in The Brethren Church, in cooperation with the seminary;

c. Charing and coordinating the work of the National Ordination Council;

d. Receiving and distributing resumes to district/regional elders.

3. Brethren Church ministry commissions be discontinued after the 1993 General Conference.

The present commission structure is expensive because the commissions are ongoing bodies supported by the national budget and they generate programs which also must be funded. Under this proposal, GCEC would continue to lead the church in the priorities established by General Conference. Commission chairpersons would be retained for one year as a resource to GCEC.

Self-supporting focus groups could be formed to assist GCEC, made up of people with interest and skills in particular areas. Rather than creating programs, emphasis would be placed on helping districts and churches network with Brethren people who have specific expertise in particular ministries.

Full support for Passing On the Promise would continue through the three-year process, with the POtP National Coordinator and Field Staff giving leadership.

4. Our primary communication vehicle, THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, be redesigned and focused to reach a wider portion of the church.

With a downsizing of the national office, the EVAN-

Nominees for General Conference Executive Council

The following candidates have been submitted by the Nominating Committee. Those elected will serve a three-year term on the Executive Council. One person will be elected for each position. Delegates will have opportunity to make nominations from the floor on Tuesday afternoon. Before persons may be nominated from the floor, they shall have given prior consent (preferably in writing) to those making the nominations.

Moderator-Elect (Moderator in 1994-95)

Nominees were still being chosen at the time of publication.

Member At-Large

Gene Eckerley, Mishawaka, Ind. Pastor of Mishawaka Community Brethren Church and Indiana District Elder.

James Rowsey, Orrville, Ohio. Pastor of Smithville Brethren Church and Ohio District Moderator.

Brenda Shanholtz, Clear Spring, Md. Professional secretary. Deacon, Sunday school teacher, and Christian education ministry member at St. James Brethren Church.

Robert Stahl, Ligonier, Pa. Pastor of Meyersdale Main Street Brethren Church.

West Region Representative (Midwest, Northern California, and Southwest Districts)

G. Emery Hurd, Cheyenne, Wyoming. Pastor of Cheyenne Brethren Church.

Roger Stogsdill, Manteca, Calif. Pastor of Northgate Community Brethren Church.

David West, Tucson, Ariz. Pastor of Northwest Brethren Chapel.

Plains Region Representative (Central and Indiana Districts)

To fill the 1-year remaining of the term of the late Mark Baker)

Jeanette Sullivan, Milledgeville, Ill. She was appointed by GCEC to fill this position pending General Conference approval.

Ashland University/Theological Seminary Representative

Dale Stoffer has been named by the university/seminary leadership as their nominee for representative on GCEC. Dr. Stoffer of Ashland, Ohio, is assistant professor of Historical Theology at the seminary and was General Conference moderator in 1987-88.

GELIST becomes even more important as a means of creating cohesiveness within the denomination. Presently only about one-third of Brethren homes receive the EVANGELIST. Redesigning the EVANGELIST would enable us to get it into every Brethren home at the current cost.

Beginning with the January 1994 issue, the EVANGELIST would become an 8-page newsletter mailed to every Brethren family for whom we have an address. It would focus on developing vision for the denomination and would include articles/columns on issues most vital to the church plus denominational and local church news of broad interest.

5. The Brethren Church ministries (Brethren Church National Office) fair share support figure be reduced from \$31 to \$25 for the year 1994.

A downsized national office will require less funding from Brethren churches. The reduction in requested fair share support for Brethren Church ministries (Brethren Church National Office) would make funds available at other levels for ministry priorities of the church.

6. Beginning with the 1994 Conference, the General Conference credential fee be increased from \$30 to \$50 per delegate to cover all costs of Conference, including administrative time to plan and prepare for it.

The combination of an increase in credential fees and a decrease in requested fair share support would provide a net savings for those churches presently giving full support (30% of all Brethren churches). For churches giving substantially less than full 100% fair share support, it may require an increase in giving. The 26 churches presently subscribing to the EVANGELIST for 100% of their members would also realize a substantial savings — the subscription fees paid for their members.

This recommendation is scheduled for discussion Wednesday morning, August 4. We expect many will have comments, questions, or suggestions on this issue prior to that time. If so, please direct them to members of the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) rather than to the national office staff. We also ask that all Brethren be in special prayer regarding this issue.

GCEC recommends adoption and implementation of this proposal.

Recommendation 2 — Possible Cooperative Ministry

Denominations our size cannot accomplish every type of ministry we would like to attempt, or even every type we have done in the past. Cooperative ministry with another church on the denominational level would provide an expanded base of support and opportunity to offer a broader ministry.

Therefore, GCEC recommends that General Conference elect a special seven-member committee (five elders, one layman, one laywoman) to explore the possibility of closer ties and cooperative ministry with a like-minded denomination that shares our vision, such as the Brethren in Christ.

We suggest the Brethren in Christ because of how much we share with them: Anabaptist and Pietist heritage, baptism by trine immersion, footwashing, training of church leaders through Ashland Theological Seminary, and membership in the National Association of Evangelicals. They have many churches in eastern Pennsylvania and California where we have only a few. They have some churches in areas where we have smaller districts.

We cannot predict the openness of the Brethren in Christ to developing a closer relationship with us or what form that relationship might take. The committee elected by General Conference would explore those possibilities and report its findings. General Conference would then decide what action should be taken.

Recommendation 3 — Proposed 1994 Local Church Goals

The following goals have been prepared by the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) and are recom-

A Covenant from the Members of General Conference Executive Council Offered to Members of The Brethren Church

In their desire to express their commitment to the denomination as a whole, the members of the General Conference Executive Council have adopted the following covenant. It will become part of the installation of Executive Council members at General Conference.

Whereas: We, the members of the General Conference Executive Council, believe that those who are called to a position of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ are called as servant leaders; and

Whereas: We believe that brothers and sisters in Christ must live and serve faithfully in order to be deserving of mutual trust;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED: We, the members of the General Conference Executive Council, depending on the wisdom and power of God, hereby make this covenant with the members of The Brethren Church:

1. We will strive to glorify and please God through everything we do in our duties as officers of this denomination and in our private lives.
2. In our official work and decisions, we will consider the will of God and the interests of The Brethren Church as a whole, not our own personal benefit.
3. We will be accountable to the members of The Brethren Church as they have expressed their will through the decisions of General Conference.
4. We will diligently communicate with The Brethren Church at large and explain our actions with honesty and with as much openness as biblical principles allow.
5. We will be open and responsive to all input, including criticism brought in love.

mended for use by local churches. They reflect the mission statement of The Brethren Church and denominational priorities.

1. New Church Development—study the possibility of beginning a new church by December 31, 1995, either singly or with one or more other congregations, with the cooperation of the national Missionary Board and the New Church Development Commission.

2. Leadership Development—challenge and officially call at least one person/couple/family from the congregation to prepare for or enter vocational ministry.

3. On-Going Denominational Emphases—participate in all on-going denominational emphases, including the following:

- Passing On the Promise
- Ministry Recruitment Sunday (Sunday, June 5, 1994)
- Registration of youth group with National BYIC between September 1 and December 31, 1994
- Full quota of delegates to district and General Conference
- At least one fellowship event with one or more Brethren churches
- An annual missionary conference
- Send a report on at least one church event or an individual during the year to THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST

4. Fair Share Support—budget full fair share support for each denominational ministry, sending support checks
(continued at bottom of next page)



Sarasota Hispanic Brethren Congregation Dedicates Its First Building on May 23rd

Sarasota, Fla. — Iglesia de los Hermanos (the Hispanic Brethren Church in Sarasota) held a service of dedication on Sunday afternoon, May 23, for its first church building.

Since its beginning as a Spanish Bible Class in 1979, the Hispanic congregation had used the facilities of the Sarasota First Brethren Church for its meetings. But in the last few years the congregation felt the need for a building of its own. The possibility of meeting this need began to be realized just under a year ago, when a suitable church building came up for sale.

The building, which sits on two acres of land, is located at 3150 44th Street, one of the major streets in Sarasota. It houses a worship area that will seat about 100 people, four classrooms, an

office, and a kitchen. In addition to using the building for its worship services and other activities, the congregation has started a day care in the facility.

Purchase price was \$195,000. Funds from the national Missionary Board's 1993 Growth Partner Club Call will be used to help pay for the building.

Rev. Daniel Rosales, pastor of the church, led the dedication program. Dr. J.D. Hamel, pastor of the Sarasota First

Brethren Church during the beginning years of the Hispanic ministry, presented the message for the service.

Also participating in the service were Kathy Rosales, Pastor Rosales's wife; Rev. Daniel Gray, current pastor of the Sarasota First Brethren Church; Rev. Russell Gordon, director of Home Missions and Church Growth for the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church; Jan Solomon, who played an important part in the beginning of

the Hispanic ministry (see page 5); and Fernando Ahumada.

Retired Brethren Missionary Rob Byler played the prelude and offertory for the service. Mark Ray, Director of Ministries and Youth at the Sarasota First Church, presented special music.

Approximately 150 people attended the service, about half of whom were visitors. The visitors included members from all the Brethren churches in the Florida District, as well as from another Hispanic congregation in the area.

A reception followed the service, featuring Hispanic foods prepared by the members of Iglesia de los Hermanos.



Interior view of the building showing some of the dedication-day crowd. Photo by Jan Solomon

GCEC Recommendations

(continued from page 13)

throughout the year, with final contributions for the year sent no later than December 26, 1994 (all figures are per Church Growth Index point):

Brethren Church Ministries (including support for Summer

Crusaders) \$31.00

World Relief 6.00

Missionary Board 57.00

Ashland University 10.00

Ashland Theological Seminary 12.00

Ministerial Student Aid 3.00

Christian Campus Ministry 2.00

(Note that recommendation 1 includes a proposal that would reduce the \$31.00 Brethren Church Ministries amount above to \$25.00.)

GCEC recommends the adoption of these goals and their referral to local churches for consideration and implementation.

Lanark, Ill. — The First Brethren Church of Lanark entered the float at right in the town's annual Old Settlers Parade recently. The float featured Noah's Ark, with children from the Sunday school sitting around it. The motto was, "Sink in Sin or Swim in Him."

Photo by Sue Michael



Centennial Celebration is Culmination of North Georgetown 100th-year Observance

North Georgetown, Ohio — The First Brethren Church of North Georgetown brought its ten-month centennial obser-



Rev. Lynn Mercer makes a point during his centennial sermon.

vance to culmination on Sunday, June 20, with a Centennial Celebration.

The celebration came 100 years and two days after the initial service was held in the first church building of the congregation. The church was established in the fall of 1892, but services were held in the North Georgetown Town Hall until the June 18, 1893, dedication of a church building. That building is still the one in use, but a number of improvements and several additions have been made to it over the years.

The speaker for the centennial service was Rev. Lynn Mercer, pastor of the Gretna Brethren Church near Bellefontaine, Ohio. Rev. Mercer grew up in the North Georgetown Church and is the great-grandson of charter member Leander Stoffer.

In his message Rev. Mercer reviewed the history of the church and spoke of the differences in 1893 between this congregation and the neighboring Church of the Brethren. He noted that

the site for the church building was chosen because of the creek that runs next to the property, which was used in all seasons for baptizing. The present baptistry was built in 1979.

A record crowd of 165 people attended the centennial worship service, including former members from as far away as Florida and Colorado. Many of those in attendance wore clothes reminiscent of those worn in the 1890's.

Also present for the service were Brethren missionaries Dave (a former pastor of the congregation) and Diane

Kerner. Diane presented special music during the worship service. Then at the old-fashioned fellowship meal that followed the service, Dave told about some of their experiences as missionaries in Colombia, South America.

Also at the fellowship meal letters were read from several former pastors, including Dr. L.E. Lindower, Rev. Larry Baker, Rev. Jerald Radcliff, Rev. Thomas Shannon, Rev. Robert Hoffman, and Rev. Bill Walk.

The theme for the ten-month centennial observance was "Looking Back With Joy, Looking Forward With Hope." By all appearances, the congregation is making this theme a reality. According to Pastor Fred Brandon, "The [North Georgetown] church is alive and well with new families coming nearly every Sunday. . . . The congregation has a vision committee to explore ways of expansion, and a new pastor's study and an addition to the parking lot have already been completed."

— reported by Pastor Fred Brandon



Rev. Fred Brandon in the pastor's study, which was completely remodeled by the men of the church (new walls, ceiling tile, and carpet, and new oak furniture and bookshelves).

Berlin Handbell Choir Holds Tenth Anniversary Reunion

Berlin, Pa. — The Berlin Brethren Church handbell choir celebrated its 10th anniversary on Sunday, May 23, with a reunion for past and present members.

During the past ten years, the handbell choir has in fact become three choirs — junior, senior, and adult — and each of these groups presented special music during the May 23rd morning worship service.

Following the service, a covered dish dinner was held for past and present members of the choirs and their families. A total of 115 persons attended the dinner, including special guests M. Geneva Altfather, a faithful supporter of the choirs, and Mrs. Polly Benschhoff, whose late husband Rev. St. Clair Benschhoff served as interim pastor of the Berlin congregation in 1991.

A program following the meal included a video presentation of choir events from the past ten years, much reminiscing, awarding of certificates to past and present ringers, and the

presentation of a beautiful plaque to choir directors Norman and Joan Menhorn.

On June 29 the Senior Bell Choir traveled to Alfred University in Alfred, New York, to participate along with approximately 1,000 other handbell ringers from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in a handbell festival.

— reported by Norman Menhorn, director

Our spirituality can be compared to an airplane ride — the higher we rise, the smaller things on earth become.

— *The Lamplighter*

"Pass On the Promise" is Theme Of Indiana District Conference

Shipshewana, Ind. — "Pass On the Promise" was the theme of the Indiana District Conference held June 4-5 at the Brethren Retreat Center at Shipshewana.

Rev. Brad Hardesty, pastor of the New Paris First Brethren Church, served as moderator. Attendance both Friday evening and Saturday was in the range of 150 persons. Seated delegates totaled 141 present plus 10 elders in absentia.

Following auxiliary meetings Friday afternoon, the conference officially opened Friday evening with a worship service and the moderator's address. Moderator Hardesty led the delegates in singing a number of contemporary choruses during the worship time, accompanying the singing on his guitar. Other members of the district executive committee assisted with scripture and prayer. Hardesty then spoke on the conference theme, using theme verses 1 Peter 2:9 and Jeremiah 1:5.

Hardesty offered four suggestions for every Indiana District congregation as

part of his address: (1) be involved in an evangelism/church growth process in 1994; (2) send representatives to at least one evangelism/church growth training event in 1993-94; (3) offer an evangelism/church growth class in 1993-94; and (4) read at least four books on evangelism and church growth in 1993-94. All suggestions were supported by the conference during the business session on Saturday.

Also on Saturday, the conference adopted a 1994 budget that reduced the Unified Financial Budget support from each congregation from \$23 to \$21 per Church Growth Index point. The proposal also changed the support for the district elder position from \$200 per congregation to \$5 per index point.

This change will enable the district to employ District Elder Gene Eckerley for one-half time service. In addition to continuing and expanding his work in pastoral and congregational care, Eckerley will help facilitate the work of the district board of directors and ministries.

Lanark Church Welcomes Garretts as Pastoral Family

Lanark, Ill. — Members of the First Brethren Church made their new pastoral family — James and Elizabeth Garrett and their children, Matthew and Lora — feel welcome when they came to Lanark on Saturday, May 22.

When the Garretts arrived, an unloading crew was waiting to move their things into the parsonage, and supper was in the oven. Then during the worship service the following morning, Bob Michael, chair of the pulpit committee,

presented the Garretts a table full of groceries that had been contributed by the members of the congregation.

A formal reception for the Garretts was held on Sunday, June 6, with more than 125 in attendance. This was also a reception for Rev. Robert Schubert, who is serving as associate pastor, and his wife Mayme. Rev. Schubert served as interim pastor for several months prior to Garrett's arrival.

Jim Garrett is the son of Pastor and Mrs. Buck Garrett of the Bradenton, Fla., Brethren Church. Jim and his family went to Lanark from Ashland, Ohio, where Jim was a student at Ashland Theological Seminary.

— reported by
Sue Michael

Lanark's new pastor, James Garrett (2nd from l.), and his wife Elizabeth with associate pastor (and former interim pastor) Rev. Robert Schubert and his wife Mayme.

Photo by R. Guenzler



The district Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care reported to the conference on progress on developing a consensus position on ordination and divorce. A proposed statement was distributed to the conference, but no action on the statement was requested or taken. Instead, churches were asked to continue to study this issue during the coming year.

A unique feature of the conference was a small-group discussion time on Saturday afternoon. Delegates were invited to join a discussion related to a ministry in which they are involved in their local church. Purpose of the discussions was to share ideas, to celebrate victories, and to support one another in that area of ministry. Groups were formed around the ministries of fellowship and membership, worship and music, small group ministries, evangelism and outreach, deacons and deaconesses, and Christian education.

Rev. James Thomas, pastor of the Loree First Brethren Church, was installed as the new moderator. Newly-elected officers are Duane Dickson, moderator-elect; Ron Burns, secretary; John Long, treasurer; and Woodrow Immel, statistician.

According to the 1992 statistical report, the Indiana District has a total of 37 congregations with a combined membership of 4,377 and an average worship attendance of 3,691. Last year 235 members were gained and 201 lost for a net gain of 34.

— reported by Ronald W. Waters

AU School of Education Accredited by NCATE

Ashland, Ohio — Ashland University's School of Education and Related Professions has been accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Ashland University is one of the first private institutions in Ohio to be accredited by the NCATE under its new, more stringent standards.

Accreditation by NCATE shows that the school has met national standards of excellence. The university's education graduates will have added prestige associated with their degrees by virtue of having attended a nationally accredited school.

The NCATE report commended AU for "far exceeding" normal standards in two important areas of preparing school personnel: AU's relationship with schools and what it described as "an exceptional sequence" of field and clinical experiences.

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

Have you ever gone fishing? My dad spends quite a bit of his spare time fishing at Lake Erie. Sometimes I am at his house when he comes home with all the fish he can catch for a day. I really get excited when he lets me take some fish home with me to eat. Boy, those fish are really tasty!

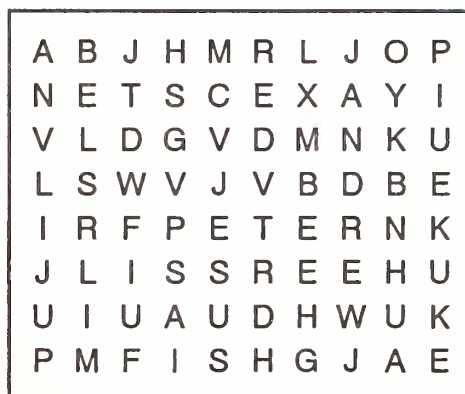
Some of Jesus' disciples were fishermen. I'm sure they got really excited when they would pull in their fishing nets full of wonderful, delicious fish. Maybe this is why Jesus used fishing to explain one of the most important lessons in the Bible.

While Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee, He met two fishermen who were brothers. Their names were Peter and Andrew. Jesus told them that if they would follow Him, He would make them fishers of men. Does that mean that they would be catching people with fishing poles? No, but it does mean that they would be "catching" people and helping them to know Jesus. Peter and Andrew were so excited about learning to know Jesus better and about helping others learn to know Him too that they quickly said yes!

We need to remember that we should be like these two brothers. We should try to help other people know Jesus better. Is there someone you could invite to Sunday school who doesn't know Jesus? Wouldn't it be great if you could be one of Jesus' fishers of men?!

Can you find these words in the box of letters below?

fish	Andrew
Jesus	nets
Peter	lake



Use this code to decode the message below, which will help you remember what Jesus wants you to be.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
! @ # \$ % ▼ & * ✦) { } ★ + ? > < + = \ [] ☼ ● □ ■



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Former Cleveland Browns Player Addresses Brethren at Southeastern District Conference

Mathias, W. Va. — Rickey Bolden, former professional football player for the Cleveland Browns and now pastor of the Washington, D.C., Brethren Church, was the inspirational speaker for the Southeastern District Conference held April 24 at the Mathias Brethren Church.

Pastor Bolden left little doubt that he is on fire for God and determined to spread that fire in the Washington area. He has introduced a different style of worship and has initiated an "open door" policy at the church, inviting and welcoming various groups to worship and to make use of the church facility. As a result, the Washington Church, with but 38 members, is averaging 60 at its worship services, with 100 in attendance on Easter.

Prior to the business session, District Moderator Pat Velanzon shared concerns, observations, and recommendations. He commended the churches of the district that have joined the Passing On the Promise process, but expressed his concern that approximately half of the churches in the district decided not to be a part of the process.

He also expressed concern at the lack of communication from the district boards to the district executive committee and to the local congregations. To resolve this situation, he recommended that the chairs of the three district boards be members of the Executive Committee, and that quarterly meetings be held by the Executive Committee, with a report of these meetings to

be sent to each local church. This recommendation was later accepted by the conference.

The moderator also called upon the district Mission Board to be on the cutting edge of helping the district start new mission points, home churches, and outreach points. He challenged the district to have five of these combinations started within the next two years.

He stressed the importance of prayer in making these things happen and recommended that all churches in the district participate in the National Day of Prayer on May 6, 1993, and the Brethren Day of Prayer on August 1, 1993.

During the business session delegates approved an executive committee recommendation to increase to 30 percent the share of the apportionment designated for the district board of Christian education and to delete the eight percent designated for Campus Ministry.

A recommendation to hold the district business conference in the fall and the spiritual conference in the spring (instead of *vice versa*) and to make the fall 1993 conference a two-day (Friday evening and Saturday) transition conference for both inspiration and business was also approved. The fall gathering is scheduled for September 24-25 at the Waterbrook Brethren Church in Edinburg, Va.

Former Brethren missionary Mark Logan was installed as the new moderator. Newly elected (or re-elected) officers are Rev. Mike Woods, moderator-elect; Odessa Shelton, secretary and

Dee Keplinger assistant; Christina Moyers, treasurer and Lois Hutzell, assistant. Seventy-seven delegates (13 ministerial, 64 lay) and 50 youth attended the conference.

According to the 1992 statistical report, the Southeastern District has 22 congregations with a total membership of 1,609 and a combined average worship attendance of 1,327. The district gained 105 members in 1992 and lost 110 members for a net loss of 5.

— written by the editor from Secretary Odessa Shelton's minutes and district reports

Gatewood Church Honors Pastor and Mrs. Bill Skeldon

Oak Hill, W. Va. — A pastor appreciation dinner and program were held June 6 at the Gatewood Brethren



Rev. and Mrs. Bill Skeldon

Church to honor Rev. Bill Skeldon and his wife, Gene.

Also attending the events were members of the Oak Hill

Brethren Church, where Rev. Skeldon also serves as pastor. He has served both congregations for almost 18 years.

A covered-dish dinner was provided by the members of the Gatewood Church. This was followed by an inspirational service that featured guest singers as well as testimonies by members of both churches of their appreciation and love for Pastor Skeldon and his wife. A love offering for Pastor and Mrs. Skeldon was received at the close of the service.

Organizer of this event was Johnny Wimmer of the Gatewood Church.

— report and photo by R. Rogusky

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST: Just OUR Magazine? Or a Tool for Evangelism?

Do you "recycle" your Christian magazines? Until recently, although it had been my habit to pass along to friends *Focus on the Family* and *Today's Christian Woman*, I must admit that I usually filed THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST in my office just in case I needed an article for future reference. After all, the EVANGELIST is just for us, right?

Perhaps not. THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST is an excellent source for updates on what is happening in the brotherhood. But that's just the beginning.

Recently I was reading a copy on a flight from Florida to Michigan, when

the woman seated next to me asked to borrow it. Two hours (and cover to cover) later, she became a subscriber.

What kinds of people might be interested in reading our magazine? You'd be surprised.

Backstage at a recent Michael W. Smith concert, I had the opportunity to give a copy of the EVANGELIST containing the late Mark Baker's story to Michael W. Smith himself. Mark had been to Smith's home just a year before his death. Michael was visibly moved by Mark's article.

So read on, Brethren, and then pass it on!

— Jan Solomon

— Robert E. Speer

From The



Grape Vine

The Williamstown, Ohio, First Brethren Church will celebrate its centennial anniversary on Sunday, September 26, 1993. The day of celebration will include the morning worship service at ten o'clock, with Dr. Fred Finks, Vice President of Ashland Theological Seminary, giving a message; a carry-in dinner at noon; and a service of testimony and praise at 1:00 p.m. Pastor Eugene Oburn and the Williamstown congregation invite all who can make it to come and be a part of the celebration.

Gene A. Geaslen, on May 17, assumed the position of administrator at Grace Brethren Village, a health-care and retirement facility in Englewood, Ohio. Geaslen served for 17 years as administrator of the Brethren's Home in Flora, Ind. He is an active member of The Brethren Church and currently serves on the Boards of Directors of Brethren Men of Mission, the Brethren Printing Company, and the Brethren Care (of Ashland) Foundation.

In Memory

Ruth E. (Solomon) Coleman, 71, June 24. Member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, where she participated in the Berean Sunday school class and was active in the World Relief sewing group. Services by Dr. Charles Munson and Associate Pastor Randy Saultz.

Dennis H. Grumbling, 33, June 11. The son of Rev. and Mrs. Alvin Grumbling, Dennis was a former member of the Flora First Brethren Church, where his father is the pastor. He served as a Summer Crusader in 1978. Services by W. Vyhmeister, assisted by Rev. Alvin Grumbling.

Mark L. Flory, 75, June 9. Member since 1954 of the Dayton Hillcrest Brethren Church, where he served as a deacon and as hospitality chairman and building maintenance supervisor. Services in West Milton, Ohio.

Wayne C. Merboth, 80, June 8. Member of the Lanark First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Robert Schubert and Pastor James Garrett.

Richard S. Murray, 76, June 8. Member of the St. James Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Brian Moore.

Grace Marie Solomon, 95, June 5. Member of the Ashland Garber Brethren Church and active in the World Relief sewing group of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church. Mrs. Solomon was the mother of eight children, including Brethren

Worship services of the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church are appearing on a local television channel. The church is included in a project sponsored by a local funeral home in which area church services are videotaped on Sunday morning, then shown on television the following Monday. One church service from the community is videotaped each Sunday on a rotating basis, and a service of the Oak Hill Brethren Church was the third to be broadcast. This videotape was made of the service on May 30, and the report is that all went well and that it was a nice experience. Making the occasion even more special was the first appearance in the congregation that day of Pastor and Mrs. Bill Skeldon's newest granddaughter, Suzanne Rebecca Skeldon (daughter of Matthew and Jane Skeldon), who was born just nine days earlier (May 21).

* * * * *

A "slam-dunk for religious free speech" was scored recently, according to *Insight*, the newsletter of the Public Affairs Office of the National Association for Evangelicals, when the Supreme Court unanimously held that a church was entitled to rent public school facilities on the same basis as nonreligious groups. In *Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District*, the Court ruled that Lamb's Chapel could not be denied equal access to school property because it wanted to present films with a religious perspective (a James Dobson film series). Other

pastor Rev. George Solomon (deceased) and Brethren missionary Rev. Kenneth Solomon. Services by Dr. Arden Gilmer, Rev. Ralph Gibson, and Dr. Leroy Solomon (her grandson).

Irene Felthouse, 80, June 1. Member for 21 years of the Elkhart First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Timothy P. Garner.

Dorothy Moore, 81, June 1. Member for 60 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Paul Tinkel.

Donald Mentzer, 23, May 14. Member of the Fairless Hills-Levittown Brethren Church. Services by Pastor C. William Cole.

Joyce Gheen, 54, April 30. Member of the Covenant Community Brethren Church of Fredericksburg, Va. Mrs. Gheen was the wife of Rev. Ernest Gheen, pastor of the Covenant Community Church. They were the parents of two daughters, Kathy (Musser) and Karla. Services by Rev. Albert Huston, pastor of the Dranesville Church of the Brethren (Joyce's home church).

Weddings

Kristine Dittmar to Jason Janssen, June 26, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church; Pastor Kenneth Sullivan, officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

Renea Iske to Brad Witt, June 19, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Rev. Jerry Witt officiat-

A Small Girl With a Big Wish

Vandergrift, Pa. — Pam Hockenberry of the Pleasant View Brethren Church



Pam Hockenberry

placed second in her fifth-grade class at Vandergrift Elementary School recently in an "If I Had a Wish" essay contest.

And What is her wish? To be a Brethren pastor.

Here is her essay:

If I had a wish, it would be . . . to be a pastor. I could go to hospitals and preach to people. Not just any preacher — a Brethren pastor. I have a feeling this wish will come true. I want this wish and I hope I can go to Ashland University. This is a big wish, but I can handle it.

groups, including those presenting secular programs on the family, were welcome. This is a significant ruling for the Brethren denomination, since Brethren home mission churches often hold their first services in schools.

ing, assisted by Pastor James Garrett. Members of the Lanark First Brethren Church.

Shanna Sparrow to Darren Dutton, May 8, at the Warsaw First Brethren Church; Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser officiating. Bride a member of the Warsaw First Brethren Church.

Suzanne Barklow to William Wisely, April 17, at the Lanark First Brethren Church; Rev. Robert Schubert officiating.

Christine Sullivan to James Terry, March 13, in Columbus, Ohio; Rev. Kenneth Sullivan, pastor of the Milledgeville Brethren Church and father of the bride, officiating. Bride a member of the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

Devon and Pauline Humbarger, 50th, June 26. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Hensel and Goldie Cline, 50th, June 7. Members of the Mount Olive Brethren Church.

John and Alma Harshbarger, 60th, May 27. Members of the Mount Olive Brethren Church.

Jake and Georgie Arehart, 50th, May 22. Members of the Mount Olive Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Pleasant Hill: 3 by transfer
Mount Olive: 2 by baptism, 2 by transfer

105th General Conference

August 2-6

Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio

Theme: "Witnesses to the World"

Theme Verse: Acts 1:8

The Brethren Church is about to launch a bold evangelism thrust this fall through the Passing On the Promise process. It will involve outreach to "our world," beginning first in our "Jerusalem" — our own communities — and reaching beyond to "the ends of the earth."

But any evangelistic effort will only succeed to the degree that it is bathed in prayer. So a major part of our Conference will be devoted to praying and to instruction related to prayer.

The 1993 Conference will feature:

- David Bryant as outside speaker and prayer leader
- Rich times of worship and fellowship
- Addresses by Moderator Glenn Grumbling and Moderator-Elect Russell Gordon
- Practical workshops
- A variety of luncheons and banquets
- Updates on denominational ministries
- Business sessions

*Don't miss this year's General Conference! Make plans now to attend and complete the registration form on page 13 of the June EVANGELIST no later than **July 21**.*

See you in August!



David Bryant

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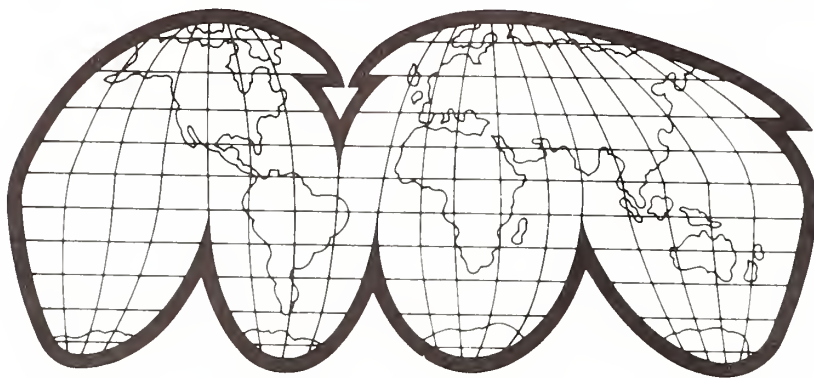
SEPTEMBER 1993



**Northview Brethren Life
Dedicates New Worship Center**

See page 18.

Developing a Global Vision



by
**John
Maust**

Cut the Complaining

HE LOOKED THE AGE of your Average Little Leaguer. But this Peruvian boy knew nothing of fun and games. He lived in an Andean Mountain region plagued by terrorist attacks. And the latest onslaught had just claimed his father's life.

A gut-wrenching scene

"Daddy, Daddy, Daddy," the boy moaned in his native Quechua language, as if his cries would somehow restore his beloved father.

A television crew sent by helicopter to the remote mountain village of Huayllao recorded the pathetic scene. The boy was sitting in front of his gutted house, which had been torched by the terrorists, with an infant beside him. The boy wore the typical Quechua wide-brimmed felt hat and a black poncho, which he now used to hide his tears.

"I told you, Daddy, let's go to the jungle, but you wanted to stay," the disconsolate boy wailed, his whole body quivering, talking more to himself than to the film crew.

The boy lowered the poncho to reveal haunted eyes staring wildly in grief. "Now you've got to take me away from here," he cried, "because if you don't, I'm going to throw myself into the river."

The gut-wrenching scene made you want to thrust your arms through the TV screen and give the boy a hug, and, if you could work miracles, somehow bring his dead daddy back to life.

I don't know about you, but I've never lived through anything even

remotely close to that boy's experience. My biggest complaints are about traffic jams going to work or long lines at the grocery store!

We in the United States live a privileged existence compared to people in most of the world. Yes, we have a Hurricane Andrew or Mississippi River flooding, which are terrible to be sure. But we don't wake up to shelling, like the folks in Beirut. Our women aren't systematically raped and tortured, like those in parts of the former Yugoslavia. And widespread famine doesn't reduce our children to hollow-eyed skeletons, as it's doing in ravaged African nations.

Yet, instead of waking up each morning with a hearty "Thank you" to God for His goodness (and a strong sense of compassion for the less fortunate), we often ignore what God has given us.

We complain. Or we aren't satisfied. And we hurry, hurry, hurry seeking fulfillment, pleasure, or more *things*, all too focused on self and forgetting about the incredible opportunities we have to serve God and to minister to a hurting world.

Yes, we can be a rather ungrateful lot, which most certainly grates on God and helps explain such texts as 1 Corinthians 10:10: "And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel."

"Me Generation" impact

You who lived through the Great Depression and World War II learned firsthand about pain, hard

work, and sacrifice. You have much to teach those of us born since then (the so-called Baby Boomers and Baby Busters), who have been influenced—perhaps more than we know—by the "Me Generation" and the pursuit of selfishness.

Even Christian workers and missionaries are sometimes affected. I get a little uncomfortable when people talk about doing missions as a way to see the world. Also, it's disconcerting when Christians leave their ministries primarily because they don't *feel* fulfilled, happy, or appreciated.

This would be like the Apostle Paul taking missionary trips just to visit Greece and Asia to try exotic foods. And, certainly, the Old Testament prophets didn't get into their line of work to make themselves or their listeners feel good.

The just-released *Mission Handbook, 1993–95* (MARC/World Vision, 1993) notes, "The spirituality of the West expressed in its materialism, drug use, financial crime and pornography is eroding the value of any good news it claims to have for the rest of the world."

"The Western church needs to come to grips with its cultural captivity and ask itself what kind of missionary encounter with its own culture is demanded."

In perspective

I'm not slamming the United States. God has blessed our nation in incredible fashion. Humanly speaking, who would want to live anywhere else? Look how many hundreds of thousands of people are trying to break down the borders to get in here.

I just think it's time for a reality check. Let's cut the complaining, thank God for His incredible blessings, start showing a little joy, and focus more on obedience than on occasions for pleasure.

Just as important, let's take advantage of the freedom and resources God has given us to reach out to hurting people in our neighborhoods and around the world—whether it feels good or not.

As Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." [†]

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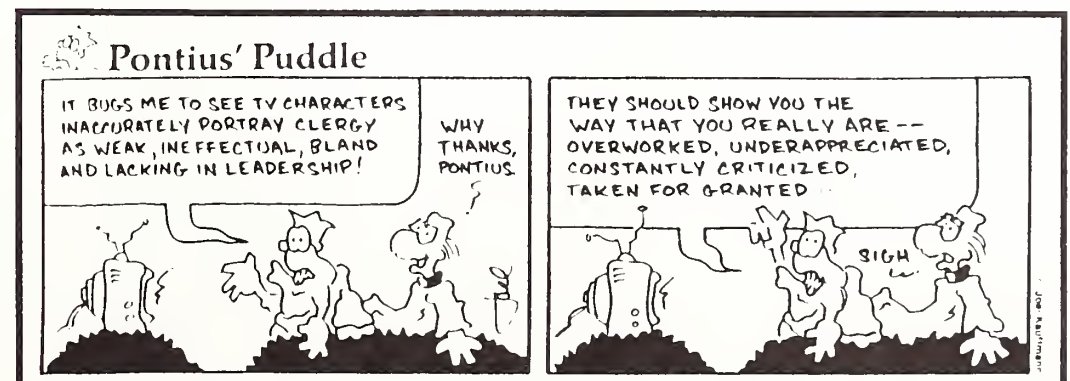
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The September *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

Cover: Exterior of the new worship center of the Northview Brethren Life congregation and interior of the multi-purpose area showing some of the people who attended the dedication of the building on August 1. (See also p. 18.)

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

Across: 4. gentle, 5. good, 6. peace, 8. never;
Down: 1. patience, 2. Luke, 3. goodness, 7. control.





Understanding the Bible

IF ASKED, "What is the word of God?" most evangelicals will probably answer, "The Bible." But the concept of the word of God is richer and more complex than that.

Basically, God's word is the expression of His character and will. God's word both explains what His will is and has the power to accomplish that will. God's creative word brought the universe into being (Gen. 1:3, etc.; Ps. 33:6; John 1:3), and it has the power to accomplish what God desires (Is. 55:11).

God's word is God's message

More specifically, God's word is God's message to His people. This message was usually a spoken word rather than a written book. For example, the word of the Lord came to Abram to tell him of God's promises for his future (Gen. 15:1). God also spoke to Isaac (Gen. 26:2), Jacob (Gen. 35:1), Moses (Ex. 3:4), and Joshua (Josh. 8:27).

God's word came to the nation of Israel through His spokespersons, the prophets. For example, the word of God came to Nathan to instruct David not to build the Temple (1 Chron. 17:3). Similarly, God appeared to Samuel and revealed Himself to him by His word (1 Sam. 3:21). God directs His people by His word given through the prophets (1 Kings 12:24; 14:18; 16:12; 2 Kings 24:2). He then acts to fulfill His word (1 Kings 22:38; 2 Kings 7:1, 16; 14:25).

The prophets themselves say that the word of God came to them (Jer. 1:2; Ez. 1:3; Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1;

Mrs. Colijn is a member of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Worthington, Ohio. She chairs the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication.

What Is The Word of God?

By Brenda B. Colijn

First in a series of articles in a new column
dealing with Bible interpretation.

Correspondence Welcomed

In this and future articles in this column, members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication will discuss topics related to interpreting the Bible. The committee invites readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of the EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

Zech. 1:1). They say that their words are the word of God (Is. 1:10), and they speak as if with God's voice (Is. 7:10). Some of them begin their messages with the familiar "Thus saith the Lord" (Haggai 1:2; Zech. 11:4). In fact, the definition of a true prophet is one to whom God speaks, who then speaks God's word to the people (Jer. 23:21-22).

God's word in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the word of God most often means the gospel message. It is first of all the message preached by Jesus (Luke 5:1; 8:11; 11:28). Jesus Himself says that His words are the word of God (John 14:24). Secondly, it is the message taken up and preached boldly by the disciples (Acts 4:31; 13:5), which spreads throughout the Roman world (Acts 6:7; 1 Thess. 1:8; 2 Thess. 3:1).

Paul declares specifically that his message is the word of God, which has power to work in those who hear it (1 Thess. 2:13). He says that this word of God includes God's plan to bring salvation to the Gentiles (Col. 1:25-27). Peter also identifies Christian preaching with the word of God (1 Pet. 1:25). The gospel message is so centered on

Christ that it can also be called the word of Christ (Rom. 10:17; Col. 3:16).

In both Old and New Testaments, the concept of the word of God usually emphasizes the message, rather than the means. This message didn't always come in the form of words; sometimes the prophets *saw* the word of God (Is. 2:1; Mic. 1:1).

Jesus as the Word of God

Most importantly, however, the Word of God also came as a person. John 1:1-14 and Revelation 19:13 call Jesus Himself the Word of God. Like the word of God in Genesis 1, Jesus is the power behind creation (John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17). Because He shares God's nature, He could show us fully who God is and what God wants from humanity (Col. 1:15; 2:9). Both in what He said and in who He was, Jesus was God's final and perfect spokesperson (Heb. 1:1-3). He was both the messenger and the message.

Finally, the word of God can also refer to Scripture. For example, in Mark 7:13, Jesus calls the Hebrew Scriptures the word of God. He quotes from Isaiah and Exodus and then accuses the Pharisees of setting aside the word of God by their traditions. Similarly, as we saw earlier, the gospel writers called Jesus' words the word of God.

The biblical writings are usually called Scripture, rather than the word of God (2 Tim. 3:16). Scripture means something that was written down, whereas the word of God was thought of as God's message, usually spoken. Nevertheless, the Bible is the word of God in a secondary sense, because in Scrip-

ture, the spoken message of God through the prophets and apostles has been written down, and the life and message of the living Word of God have been recorded.

Until recent times, people would not have thought of a book when they thought of the word of God. It was not until general literacy and the invention of the printing press that Bible reading became a possibility for the average Christian. Most believers through history have *heard* the word of God in preaching, teaching, and worship.

Problem areas

As evangelicals, we value the Bible highly and submit to its authority. And so we should. However, our view of the word of God as a printed book has created some problems.

First, we sometimes assume that references to the word of God mean the Bible when they may really mean God's promises or His prophecies or the gospel message.

Second, since we emphasize the printed book, we tend to think that everything in that book—the chap-

ter and verse divisions, our favorite translation, the red letters, the cross references, the study notes—is also the word of God. In fact, all of these helps were added to the original text of the Bible much later.

Third, we sometimes think that sharing our faith means handing someone a copy of the Gospel of John, and we forget our responsibility to share the word of God as the early disciples did. The Ethiopian eunuch read the Scriptures diligently, but he needed Philip to explain to him what he was reading (Acts 8:30-35).

Fourth, we miss the point that much of the Bible was intended to be heard, not read (Deut. 31:9-13; Jer. 36:1-7; Jas. 1:22-25; Rev. 1:3; 22:18). Hearing the Bible would force us to concentrate more on the main points and less on the details. This suggests that if we want to understand the Bible as its authors intended, we should focus on the major points rather than on the minor ones.

In response to those who have denied that the Bible is the word of

God, we have properly defended its authority. We must continue to do so, because it is through the written word that we come to know the living Word. But we have sometimes forgotten that the most important authority lies not in the words of the text but in the living Word to whom the text points. We should put at least as much energy into following the Word as we have into defending the words.

The answer to our question

So, to return to our title, "What is the Word of God?" First and foremost, it is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is also the message of God, God's plan of salvation that climaxes in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Finally, it is the book that records that message and witnesses to the living Word—the Bible.

The written word, important as it is, is not an end in itself. We must always allow it to speak God's challenging message to us and point us beyond the text to a relationship with the living Word of God, Jesus Christ. [†]

$$\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} = ?$$

Finding the Common Denominator

$$\frac{3}{4} - \frac{1}{6} = ?$$

$$2\frac{2}{5} + 3\frac{2}{9} = ?$$

By Barbara Roderick

$$41\frac{2}{7} - 11\frac{5}{9} = ?$$

I LEARNED from elementary mathematics that if I wanted to solve problems containing fractions, I first had to find the common denominator.

I have found that many situations in everyday life are much like a math session. We are all fractional human beings in one way or another. We are less than the whole of what we should be.

Scripture bears this out many times. Paul, for example, in Colossians 4:12 writes of prayers offered "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." We are fractional in our many responsibilities and relationships, as well as in our personality differences and our general social variables (our likes and dislikes).

Just as in math some problems are more difficult to solve than others, so in life, some people are more difficult to deal with than others. With some people, common denominators are found rather quickly. With others, it is more difficult, but in such cases the process is undoubtedly more profitable.

I have found comparing my personal relationships with others to solving math problems to be an

excellent method of developing new relationships and of keeping established relationships on a smooth path. How? By looking for the common denominator through seeking to know others better. By being aware of areas of mutual interest and using these as footholds of common ground. And then by enlarging these footholds through greater understanding, providing a broader base for friendship.

As Christians dealing with other Christians, our best "Common Denominator" is Christ Jesus. But much of our life is spent dealing with non-Christians. With them, we have to find a common denominator of interest in other areas. We need to seek to build on our similarities rather than on our differences.

Doing so will lead to greater understanding and thus to better relationships. This, in turn, will pave the way for witnessing naturally. Coupled with prayer and direction from the Lord, this method will provide an avenue by which to lead more lost souls to a saving knowledge of Christ.

I am sure you have seen this principle at work in church summer baseball leagues, in other games, at camps, or in other gatherings. I am inspired to say, "Let's use it more often . . . every day!" [†]

Mrs. Roderick is a member of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church of Pineville, Va.

Witnesses to the World

The 1993 General Conference Moderator's Address*

By Rev. Glenn Grumbling

I WOULD LIKE to give some words of caution to The Brethren Church. I feel like that preacher who said to his congregation, "Before I preach this message I have something *important* to say." God's word warns us, "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith . . ." (1 Pet. 5:8-9, *NIV*). I've heard people almost ridicule this passage of scripture and then declare that the devil is a "toothless lion" as far as the Christian is concerned. But I have not found him to be toothless. I see him tearing churches and individual Christians apart.

A tragic compatibility

One way the devil is accomplishing this is by convincing the church that it should strive to make itself compatible with the world. Satan did this through Constantine in the fourth century. Constantine, the emperor of Rome, decided to make Christianity the state religion, even though he was not a Christian himself. He had all of his soldiers and sailors baptized, without a conversion experience, and told them they were Christians. That was probably the worst thing that ever happened to the church. The church took in the world and quickly became compatible with it. One branch of the church has



Moderator Glenn Grumbling with his wife, Nancy.

never recovered from that tragedy. It required a great Reformation to give birth to Christian churches that were separated from the world.

Whoever said the church was supposed to be compatible with the world? Certainly not our Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, He declared that it should be just the opposite (John 15:18, 19).

The church is expected to be an example to the world in an effort to lead it to Christ. We cannot be an example to the world when we become like it, i.e., compatible with it.

Brethren, I'm concerned about the present-day Constantines and about the churches and individual Christians who are being overpowered by these Constantines. I'm aware of the fact that we have a Bible-centered church and a Bible-centered seminary, and I praise God for them. But I'm also aware that most of the churches and seminaries which today are

supporting the pro-choice (which means pro-murder) and the homosexual rights movements started out being Bible-centered. Some of these formerly Bible-centered churches are now accepting homosexuals as pastors. These churches didn't change their Bible-centered positions overnight. Satan is very subtle. He can change seminaries, churches and individuals gradually. But he knows how to get the job done. We have access to a greater power than Satan. But let's not be guilty of underestimating Satan's power. Let's be willing to make changes in our methods and procedures

where changes are needed. But let us guard against accepting changes that are designed to make the church and the world compatible. They are incompatible. When they become compatible, the church is in need of another reformation.

An emphasis on evangelism

At General Conference last year I introduced our new theme, "Witnesses to the World." My message on Friday morning last year was an effort to show how we are witnesses to the world through world missions. During that week, Rev. Russ Gordon became our moderator-elect. With Russ at the helm, I realized that our emphasis for this next year would surely center on home missions and church growth. Therefore, I felt led to center my limited speaking and writing this past year on personal evangelism.

Since 50 of our churches are now involved in "Passing On the

**This is an edited version of the moderator's address. The complete address will be printed in the General Conference Annual.*

"Let's be willing to make changes in our methods and procedures where changes are needed. But let us guard against accepting changes that are designed to make the church and the world compatible."

Promise," the personal evangelism emphasis of our theme has been very appropriate. I'm really excited when I think about what "Passing On the Promise" could do for the Brethren denomination. Before we are through with the three-year process, we should have many more personal evangelists in the churches that are participating. But we all realize that the blessings won't come automatically. Our churches and their members will get out of it what they put into it. Therefore, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Gal. 6:9, *NIV*).

Should we talk our faith?

Dr. Billy Graham has a daily syndicated article in one of our local newspapers which he calls, "My Answer." In a recent article entitled "Don't be afraid to voice faith," the question was asked:

Do you think it is important or necessary for a person to talk about their beliefs? To me the important thing is living your beliefs and not talking about them all the time. I get turned off by people who talk about God but who gossip or are lazy or something, and don't act like they should.

Billy Graham's answer was:

It's certainly important for us to live our faith, and to be consistent in following Christ. I'm reminded of the old saying that "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you are saying." The Bible reminds us that "faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (James 2:17). Jesus told his disciples, "You are the light of the world. . . let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14, 16).

There are two important things that need to be said, however.

First, learn to share your faith with others. After all, people around us need to learn of God's love for them, and what Christ had done to redeem us and forgive us. Don't let your embarrassment or your fear of what others will think keep you from speaking about him as God gives you opportunity. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16).

Second, be sure of your own commitment to Christ. Sometimes, I have found, people are afraid to talk about their faith because they are uncertain whether or not they really believe. Have you realized that you're a sinner, and have you turned to Christ and trusted him as your Lord and Savior? Like the early Christians, when we truly meet Christ and commit our lives to him "we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

Why should we be witnesses?

This past year I have been emphasizing those things which motivate, yes, even compel us to personally be witnesses to the world for Christ. Let's just mention a few of these: We should be witnesses to the world:

1. Because Christ commissioned us to be. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8)
2. Because Christ promised to be with us when we are. (Matthew 28:19, 20)
3. Because God wants everyone to be saved. (I Timothy 2:3-4)
4. Because of the sacrifice of Christ. (Galatians 1:4)
5. Because of the gift of the Spirit. (Acts 1:8)
6. Because of the power of the gospel. (Romans 1:16)
7. Because of the rewards. (Mark 10:29-30)

Some of you may be convinced that God has called you to be a

witness to the world. But perhaps you are looking for an answer to the question, "What results should I expect from my witnessing?" I want to use the remaining time dealing with that question.

What results can we expect?

It's essential that we share our faith in the power of the Holy Spirit and that we do so with great expectations. But, as Campus Crusade for Christ teaches, we must leave the results with God.

I've read some books on witnessing in which the authors strongly implied that when we memorized the correct scriptures and the right transitions from one scripture to the next, then the persons to whom we witness will be compelled to accept Christ as their Savior and Lord. However, when I was still a young man, I discovered, to my dismay, that it isn't always automatic. I have shared my faith with many people who did not receive Christ—at least at that time.

So along with our great expectations, we must be prepared to have people to whom we have witnessed refuse to accept Christ. We must leave the results with God! Otherwise immature Christians may come away from such an experience feeling they are failures and therefore not qualified or responsible to be obedient to the Great Commission. Satan works extremely hard to keep us from being the witnesses God wants us to be.

After the Apostle Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus, he recognized Him to be the Messiah, he received Him as Lord and Savior of his life, and he committed himself to witnessing to the world about Jesus Christ. Of course, for someone as committed and dynamic as the Apostle Paul, witnessing for Christ was always

"I believe the next three years may produce more new personal evangelists in The Brethren Church than we have seen for a long time, perhaps more than we've ever seen before."

successful. WRONG! It wasn't always successful for our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Many turned Him down. But somehow, we get the feeling that witnessing for Christ should always be successful for us. And, when it isn't, Satan's argument that "the Great Commission wasn't meant for us" can sound very convincing.

Responses Paul received

Let's look at some of the responses Paul received when he witnessed to the world for Christ.

At the conclusion of his third missionary journey, the Apostle found himself in prison in Caesarea. His only crime was that he witnessed to the world about his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Paul was given an opportunity to share his faith in Christ Jesus with Governor Felix and his wife, Drusilla. We read about it in Acts 24:24-25. Verse 25 reveals that Felix was under conviction. Why shouldn't he be? He has a call from God through Paul's witness to him. But even though he was under conviction, Felix's response to Paul was, "Not now." As far as we know, Felix went out into eternity without receiving Christ.

If you've been sharing your faith in Christ with others, you've probably received this response often. Satan gives people all kinds of reasons to convince them that it isn't a convenient time to receive Christ into their lives. And, like Paul, you've left the scene literally sick after you poured your heart out witnessing to someone and their only response was, "Not now."

Two years later Felix was succeeded as governor by Porcius Festus. Paul was still in prison for witnessing to the world. Paul was given an opportunity to make a defense for himself in the presence of Festus and King Agrippa, who was visiting Festus.

Paul took advantage of this and gave his life history, including his conversion experience. Obviously Paul was more interested in leading these men to Christ than he was in defending himself.

The response of Festus to Paul's witness was, "Not at all" (Acts 26:24). Actually, Festus accused Paul of spending too much time studying his religion and, as a result, of losing his mind. He was saying to Paul, "I don't want anything to do with your religion."

John 15:18-21, as I mentioned earlier, reminds us that the true church and God's true disciples are incompatible with the world. When you've shared your faith with others, have you ever had anyone tell you, "NOT AT ALL—you've made yourself crazy over religion?" If so, I'm certain that you left the scene with an aching heart—not aching because of what the person said about you, but aching because the person rejected Christ. Again, we have no record that Festus ever changed his mind and received Christ.

Paul didn't give up

Well, what would you have done if you had had those experiences which Paul had? I'm afraid too many of us would have given up. We might have said, "If these turkeys don't want to be saved by Jesus, let them go to hell. Besides, I'm beginning to think that maybe I'm not cut out to be a witness to the world for Christ."

But Paul didn't give up. He turned to King Agrippa to get a response from him. But King Agrippa's response was "Not quite." An almost Christian is still not a Christian. And, once again, as far as we know, King Agrippa never came to know Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord. If you witness to the world for Christ, you've probably received this answer also. You've

probably left the scene weeping—realizing that the person to whom you witnessed is so close and yet so far away from the kingdom of God.

The responses to the gospel which Paul received were not always "No." For example, in Acts 16 we see a beautiful example of a positive response when the Philippian jailer and all of his family received Christ. Paul had many positive responses.

Why emphasize the negative?

Why then have I emphasized the negative responses. I have done this for two reasons. First, because of "Passing On the Promise." I believe the next three years may produce more new personal evangelists in The Brethren Church than we have seen for a long time, perhaps more than we've ever seen before. These new witnesses may start off receiving negative responses. I do not want them to feel that they are the only ones getting negative responses. That could be devastating and cause them to quit. I hoped to encourage veteran witnesses as well. If the Apostle Paul and our Lord Jesus Christ received some negative responses, we should be prepared to cope with some too.

The second reason I used these negative responses was to speak to anyone here who might be using these, or similar, responses themselves. In a crowd this size, there are surely some people who are still saying "NO" to God. I pray that they may see how hopeless these responses are, then turn and receive Christ as their Savior and Lord.

There is a legend that recounts the return of Jesus to glory after his time on earth. Even in heaven he still bore the marks of his earthly pilgrimage, with its mockery of a crown, a cruel cross, and

shameful death. The angel Gabriel approached Him and said, "Master, you must have suffered terribly for humankind down there." Jesus replied that he did.

Gabriel continued: "And do they know and appreciate how much you loved them and what you did for them?"

Jesus replied, "Oh, no. Not yet. Right now only a handful of people in Palestine know."

Gabriel was perplexed. "Then what have you done to let everyone know about your love for them?"

Jesus said, "I have asked Peter,

James, John and a few more friends to tell others about me. And my story will be spread to the farthest reaches of the globe. Ultimately all of humankind will have heard about my life and what I have done."

Gabriel frowned and looked rather skeptical. He knew well what poor stuff humans were made of. "Yes, but what if Peter and James and John grow weary? What if the people who come after them forget to tell your story? What if way down in the 20th century people just don't tell others about you? Haven't you

made any other plans?

Jesus replied, "No, I'm counting on them."

Twenty centuries later Jesus still has no other plan. He is still counting on us, you and me. He is counting on us to witness to the world about Him.

At the top of God's list of priorities is the evangelization of the world. Jesus' early disciples adopted His priorities and committed themselves to reaching the world for Christ. Christ counted on them and they delivered. Now it is our turn. Christ is counting on us. Will we deliver? [†]

General Conference Report

Hope for Revival Through United Prayer Is Burden of Inspirational Speaker David Bryant

GIVING HOPE to The Brethren Church was central to the purpose of Dr. David Bryant in his messages during General Conference. "My contribution to this Conference in the next 24 hours can be summarized in just one word; it is the word 'hope,'" he said.

Noting the balloons in the auditorium during the opening service of celebration and worship, he said, "We have every reason to be celebrating, because God is doing a new work in our time and He wants The Brethren Church to be right in the thick of it. Not survival. That's not the issue here this week. It's revival in the full biblical sense of that word."

What is revival?

And what is revival? In one word: "Christ." "God has nothing for us beyond who Christ is and what His kingdom is all about. So revival from beginning to end is Christ." He also provided a three-word definition: "Fuller, fullness, fulfillment." Elaborating on this, he said that revival is "a fuller revelation of who Jesus is to His people that brings about a fullness of His life within His people that leads to the fulfillment of His mission through His people."

Bryant is convinced that this kind of revival is on its way, not just in isolated churches or in our nation, but world-



Dr. Bryant takes time out from his Monday evening message to read the paper. Actually he was sharing an account of a 1905 revival from the January 27, 1905, Denver Post.

wide. "Everything appears to be that we are in fact heading for a world revival at the very opening of the 21st century. It is not far off!" he said.

Bryant pointed to the dramatic increase in prayer activity for revival that is taking place worldwide. Studies have revealed, he said, that 170 million Christians around the world are committed to praying every day for revival and world

evangelization; 20 million of these believe that such praying is their primary call in the body of Christ. Worldwide approximately 10 million prayer groups exist whose chief agenda is to pray for revival in the church and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. And 1,300 prayer networks around the world are mobilizing even more Christians to pray. *(continued on next page)*

Continuing his emphasis on "hope" for The Brethren Church, he declared that our denomination can be a part of this great prayer movement. "I want to say to you, not as a guess or a hunch, but as a prophetic word, that this denomination, along with the rest of the body of Christ, but in a very specific way this group, this fellowship, is on the threshold and at the crossroads. And God is putting before you what He is putting before His whole church. And those who respond will become the ones through whom God will bring this world to Christ; through whom revival will be unleashed in the body of Christ." Later he added, "He [God] wants to do with us in this room even this week more than we have ever dared to ask or imagine or dream."

Revival the only hope

Returning to the subject of hope in his second message, Bryant said, "There is a growing consensus that the only hope for our nation and the nations is revival in the church, and the only hope for revival in the church is a movement of united prayer." Applying this specifically to The Brethren Church, he continued, "And we could say that in terms of The Brethren Church, the only hope for this church, this denomina-



Brethren went to their knees for prayer several times during Conference week, as on this occasion during the Concert of Prayer.

tion, is revival. . . . And the only hope that you'll ever know real revival and true spiritual awakening is [through] a movement of united prayer."

Bryant expressed his conviction that people in The Brethren Church are indeed experiencing this hope. He led Conference attenders through a survey which if used in every Brethren church would reveal, he believes, that God is already speaking a sense of hope into the

hearts of the vast majority of believers; that the Spirit of God is stirring in them hope and faith for revival that most of them do not even clearly understand. Furthermore, he said, if these people discovered that many others feel the same way, they would receive unprecedented encouragement to prayer and to pursue God for revival.

Seven reasons to pray for revival

He concluded this message by giving seven reasons why he believes that we can pray and prepare for revival with great confidence that God will answer our prayers. We can do so, he said, because of:

1. *A Decisive Person:* Jesus Christ. God wants to manifest the presence of His Son in a whole new way so that we are summed up in Him as Lord.
2. *The Divine Pattern.* God has sent revival before and He wants to do it again.
3. *The Dark Prospects.* The world is in such a condition that God knows that the only hope for the mission of His Son to be fulfilled among the nations is if He gives revival.
4. *The Disturbing Paralysis.* The church itself is in such a condition that without revival, Christ's mission through His people cannot be fulfilled.
5. *The Dramatic Preparations.* It is the conviction of Christian leaders around the world that God is setting the stage right now for a major advance of the gospel among all nations.
6. *The Distinctive Praying.* God is

Catching Revival at Conference

By Carolyn Brandon

Dr. David Bryant brought to Conference a stirring of the wind and fire of the Holy Spirit to call us to prayer. The intense personality of Dr. Bryant brought us to a new awareness of the power and presence of prayer in our lives individually and as a denomination.

As we listened to the speaker, we caught a vision of how we can move forward into the age of revival by prayer. "God is more ready to give revival than we are to receive it," he said. "When God is ready to do something, we always see increased praying. God will STIR us to pray."

We were stirred to pray at Conference and to take that stirring home to our local churches. We felt that stirring during a 2½-hour Concert of

Prayer on Tuesday evening. God blew the smog out of our lives so we could see Jesus.

Dr. Bryant challenged us to look at Habakkuk 1:5 —

*Look at the nations and watch—
and be utterly amazed.
For I am going to do something
in your days
that you would not believe,
even if you were told.*

— and then to look at what is happening in our world and to be utterly amazed. Like the prophet, we are to watch and wait, in other words be "wait-watchers," he said.

As several hundred of us knelt together in prayer and lifted our voices in one accord to God for revival, we sensed an expectation of revival. REVIVAL is coming, a new awakening. Everything we do must flow out of prayer.

I caught revival in my spirit at Conference. [¶]

Mrs. Brandon is a member of the North Georgetown, Ohio, First Brethren Church, where her husband is the pastor.

stirring His people to pray with unity and vision in a way that we have never seen in the history of the church.

7. *A Determined People.* There are Christians around the world who are seeking God's Kingdom, whatever the cost to themselves.

Dr. Bryant returned to the subject of hope in his final message, which preceded the Concert of Prayer (which concluded his visit to the Conference.) He said, "What we've been talking about for the past 24 hours is the coming world revival and why that should stir such hope and faith in all of us that it will compel us to pray and prepare with-

out ceasing until God grants it to His church worldwide. And He will!"

He quoted the great church historian, J. Edwin Orr, who, after studying revival and prayer movements for 60 years, concluded that "Whenever God is ready to do something new with His people, He always sets them to praying." This praying has already begun, Bryant maintained, and in fact the movement of prayer that God is setting His people to right now is already unprecedented. And Brethren have an opportunity to be a part of it!



Praying with sword and shield in hand during the Concert of Prayer (see below).

The Concert of Prayer

David Bryant did not just talk about prayer during his visit to General Conference. He also led the Brethren who attended Conference, as well as a number of people from the Ashland community who came for the service, in a two and one-half hour prayer meeting.

This "Concert of Prayer," held Tuesday evening of Conference, followed seven major themes—rejoice, repent, resist, restore, release, receive, and recommit. The first three of these—rejoice, repent, resist—Bryant termed "preparing the ground"—getting ourselves ready for what God is going to do.

The Concert of Prayer began with prayers of rejoicing—a time of embracing the hope that's coming by praising God for what we expect Him to do.

These were followed with prayers of repentance—a time for dealing with those things that would hinder God from fulfilling what He has promised to do. (Since the overall focus of this Concert of Prayer was on revival in the church and the world, the focus of these prayers was on corporate sins, the sins of the church and the body of Christ, not individual sins.)

Next came prayers of resistance, a time for recognizing the hindrances of Satan in our lives and in the church and a time for asking God to overcome those hindrances.

It should be noted that a *period of prayer* (not just a single prayer) was spent on these themes, and that prayers were offered in different ways. People prayed in triplets (groups of three), huddles (two triplets together), and altogether-aloud-at-one-time (according to Bryant, the way many Christians around the world normally pray), as well as being led in prayer by various people from the platform. Prayers were offered sitting, standing, kneeling, and (during the prayers of resistance) standing with an imaginary shield in the left hand and an imaginary sword in the right.

Following this first period of "preparing the ground," Bryant then led the congregation into what he called the aggressive pursuit of God on the basis of His promises. These were the prayers for God to restore and release.

Prayers for restoration included prayers for self (What one thing do you want God to do in your life to revive and renew you?); prayers for the church (What one thing do

you want God to do for your church?); prayers for all pastoral staff in attendance; and prayers for the revival of the church worldwide.

What is a "Concert of Prayer"?

To many of us the term "Concert of Prayer" may sound a bit strange. We associate concerts with music, not prayer. But the basic meaning of concert, according to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, is "mutual agreement; concord; harmony of action." And this is the sense in which it is used of prayer. People come together in mutual agreement to bring their prayers in one accord before the Lord. There is agreement and harmony of action in their praying.

Though perhaps new to us, the term "Concert of Prayer," according to David Bryant, comes from the early seventeen hundreds and the great prayer movements on both sides of the Atlantic that issued in the "First Great Awakening." The term is associated particularly with the great New England preacher and theologian, Jonathan Edwards.

The prayers of release were offered for the release of the gospel, of those in captivity to sin, and of laborers. People were asked to pray specifically for one person who does not know the Lord and also for the release of the gospel in another nation or people group. Then all joined in praying for any missionaries or missionary candidates present, as well as for a whole army more of such.

The final section of the Concert of Prayer was a time to receive and recommit. First people were given an opportunity to talk over in their triplets what they sensed God was getting ready to do, what they thought they and the church could expect to receive from God. Then they prayed to one another the blessing found in 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12.

This was followed by a time to recommit, when all were challenged to offer themselves to God for Him to use to bring about the prayers they had agreed on, no matter what that might mean for them or what it might cost them. Dr. Bryant, himself, prayed the prayer of recommitment over the people, then led them in praying together the benediction found in Ephesians 3:20-21.

Other Conference Speakers

Missionary Speaker Raymond Aspinall

Even though Rev. Raymond Aspinall and his wife, Marilyn, have concluded their missionary work in Argentina following 31 years of service there, Rev. Aspinall is still vitally interested in missions. He made this abundantly clear in a message on Thursday evening of Conference, in which he answered the challenge of any who would say to him, "What? Are You Still Talking About Missions?"

He began by noting that some claim that the era of missions is past because mission work was a part of the colonial, imperial movement of past centuries. Now that we live in a global village, missions is an insult. Others, while not denying the continuing validity of missions, say that we should let the Third World do it. We've done our share; now it's their turn, and besides, they can do it so much cheaper.

Still others claim that local churches around the world should carry out the responsibility of evangelizing their people. The problem with this, however, is that, by conservative estimates, there are still at least 653 to more than 2,000 people groups in the world that don't have a local church in or near them. So despite what some may say, Aspinall remains firm in his intention to talk about missions. And he gave three reasons for doing so.

First, he is still talking about missions because he believes in the missionary nature of God. God has a missionary heart. This is seen from the very beginning of the Bible (Genesis 1), which reveals that God created the world to fill it with people for Himself. The God of creation is a missionary God. His missionary heart was seen beating in Jesus Christ, who wept over Jerusalem and who gave His very life to redeem a people unto Himself.

Second, Aspinall said that he is still talking about missions because he also believes in the missionary nature of the church. Matthew 28:18-20 reveals that the church exists for missions. Christ, by His authority, commissioned the

church to continue the task for which He was sent into the world, and that is a missionary task.

Third, he said that he is still talking about missions because of the nature of the world. The whole world is a prisoner of sin. It is alienated from God, ignorant of God, uninterested in God, unafraid of God. Without God's grace, the world is without hope. Therefore the world needs the happy, liberating Good News of Christ. And the church needs to be proclaiming that Good News.

God is actively seeking to reconcile

the whole world unto himself. And He has called the church to be His chosen people, a people belonging to Him, that the church may declare His praises, His message, to the world, so that others may also become a part of the people of God. This, said Aspinall, is why he is still talking about missions. [†]



Following his Conference message, Rev. Ray Aspinall (r.) drives home a point with Dr. Arden Gilmer.

World Relief Speaker David Loudon

What makes World Relief different from other relief agencies is that it is commissioned to work *with the church* in alleviating human suffering, said David Loudon, Disaster Response Director for World Relief Corporation of the National Association of Evangelicals, at the World Relief Soup Luncheon Thursday noon of Conference.

World Relief works with and through the church, seeking to enable the church to engage in wholistic ministry. This is important, he said, because long after relief agencies are gone from a disaster area, it is the church that remains behind and which can continue to minister in the community.

World Relief seeks to help the church understand that the "authentic mission of the church is a comprehensive activity which embraces evangelism and social action and refuses to let them be divorced," Loudon said. The biblical

warrant for holding evangelism and social action together comes in three forms, he said. (1) The character of God, as revealed in His two great commandments: love God completely and ones neighbor as oneself. (2) The ministry and teachings of Jesus, who put words and works together and who exhibited the love of God He was proclaiming by His works of compassion and power. And (3) the communication of the gospel; the gospel is not only to be verbalized, it is to be visualized. Just as the Word of God became flesh, our words must become visible through our works.

Loudon gave three illustrations of these principles at work. The first was from Liberia, where between 150,000 and 500,000 people have died in the last three years because of civil war. The Association of Evangelicals of that country asked World Relief to help
(continued following the Outlook pages)

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



September-October 1993

Volume 7, Number 1

HOW DO WE WITNESS?

The President's Message presented August 2, 1993.

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you . . . Acts 1:8.

This has been an exciting year for me. I have enjoyed meeting new people this year as I travel with my husband as much as I can on the weekends. This past year I visited some Brethren churches for the first time. I was able to attend the Indiana District Conference, but was sorry that I could not attend the other conferences. Working Monday through Friday keeps me pretty busy.

I would like to thank all of the WMS officers for the help they have given me during this past year. Their prayers and support have meant a lot to me. Thanks to all of you who have prayed for me this year.

The Conference theme is "Witnesses to the World." As members of WMS we have many opportunities to be a part of witnessing to the world. Our project for the past two years has been the Girls' Orphanage in India. Nirmala Kumar has written to me that the girls are so excited over their new home. They all work hard to keep it looking nice. Prasanth and Nirmala sent a FAX on Monday to thank the WMS for their project of the Girls' Orphanage. You had a part in that through your societies' offerings.

In past years we have helped other mission points with our projects. Several districts this year have had as their project to help finance the Eagles and Ruggles as they begin their work in Mexico City. We will hear from some of our missionary wives during the Conference.

I could go on and on about the many projects the WMS has had. Money is only *one* way we can "witness." We need to support our missionaries with prayer, write them, and encourage them in their work. It's nice to send them a *special box* once in a while. You could put in some things that they cannot purchase in their area or just something special to let them know that you are thinking of them and

their families. They really do enjoy hearing from you.

Now—money for projects, sending personal items, praying for and writing to our missionaries—those are fairly easy ways for us to witness or to help those who are witnessing. Let's really talk about witnessing! I read a story in the little devotional guide, *Our Daily Bread*, that was told to G. Campbell Morgan. A man had invited a fellow worker to attend a church service with him. He had worked with this man for five years. He responded to the invitation by saying, "Are you a Christian?" His friend answered, "Yes, I am." The friend replied, "So am I. Here we have worked together for years and never knew we were both Christians. Wasn't that funny?" Morgan replied, "Funny? No, it is not funny at all. You both need to be born again."

Isn't it strange that we will talk about almost everything with those we come in contact with on a daily basis, but find it difficult to speak of our faith in Jesus Christ. I am talking to *myself*—not just to those of you who are sitting out there. Do our acquaintances and fellow workers know of our faith in Christ? Those of you who have heard me speak about my trip to India will remember me talking about the "Secret Believers." Those women who had to worship in secret for fear of their non-believing husbands finding out and starving them or maybe killing them (accidentally).

We do not need to be afraid. Isn't it wonderful that we can be open about our Christian faith? We need to let those around us know that we believe in Christ and that He died so that we could have eternal life.

I come in contact with a lot of people in my job at the University. One gal that was new to the University would come to my office to pick up keys to the

(continued on page 2)

In Appreciation

1. To God our Heavenly Father for the blessings of the week. We were blessed far beyond our expectations!
2. To the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) for planning the inspirational Conference based on the theme, "Witnesses to the World."
3. To the auxiliary board and members who continued the theme, developing programs ideally suited to those who attended.
4. To the committees who worked "behind the scenes" for the smooth operation of the Conference.
5. To the Ashland University staff who provided a beautiful campus, delicious food, clean facilities, and for their friendliness and kindnesses.
6. To the WMS Executive Board for guidance.
7. To Berniece Miller in the National Church office, the liaison to the University.
8. To Helen Dickson, our faithful and energetic vice president for nine years. We will miss Helen's humor in the executive board meetings. Well done, good and faithful servant!
9. To Candace Berndt for her artwork on the program cover, representing "Witnessing with Power."
10. To Charlene Rowser, the devotional leader. The *Newsletter* will include her inspirational messages.
11. To Lucille Woesner for the special features in the *Devotional Guide*.
12. To Tom McConahay, the auctioneer.

HOW DO WE WITNESS?

(continued from page 1)

Student Activities van. We would chat for a few minutes each time she came. One day I saw her at a church service. When she saw me, she said, "I just knew you were a Christian by the way you acted!" That was a nice compliment, but it made me aware of how others see me and what I can do to cause others to maybe think that I was *not* a Christian. We need to be aware of how we appear to others.

Even though our actions are important to those around us, we cannot use the excuse that we let our actions speak for us. We still need to be *vocal* about our love for Christ. We need to take opportunities to *talk* to people about our faith. Acts 1:8 says:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to all the ends of the earth.

This command was given to the apostles, but it is for all those who have received Christ.

The command is to be "Witnesses for Him." We do not need to "preach" to those we want to witness to. There will be many ways that will open to us. I refer to the Lord in much of my conversation. "I guess the Lord had other plans for you;" or, when there is a death, "I am so happy that he (or she) was a Christian;" or "I've asked the Lord to watch over my son as he travels." Some will look at me and not know what to say; others will want to know what I mean. This gives the opportunity to talk.

The opportunities are there—we just need to take them. It is not easy either. There are times when it is very difficult. Matthew 28:20 says:

And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

This is the Lord telling us that He will always go with us. My husband has used this saying many times, "Talk to God about man before you talk to man about God." Pray and ask for opportunities to witness. He will give them to you.

As we end our WMS year and think of beginning a new one, let's make a promise to ourselves to let those around us know we are Christians—by our *actions* and our *voices*. God bless each of you.

Shirley Black, president

Missionary Miscellany

The pleasures of Conference include visiting with missionaries. This was an exceptional year because several missionaries were home.

Dave and Diane Kerner were on a 90-day furlough; hence, they returned to Colombia soon after Conference. Since their flight included four plane changes and one was in Panama, they asked for special prayer.

Todd and Tracy Ruggles were concerned about customs at the Mexican border. Their car was full of household items for themselves and the Eagles. Tim and Jan returned to Mexico City the following week, after Tim's ordination—which was a joy!

Illness prevented María Miranda from attending, and Marilyn Aspinall was also sick. Pray for healing for both ladies. Maria continues her Spanish radio ministry. Marilyn and Ray are seeking God's will for their future.

Since Sharon Winter continued her graduate studies in Arizona this summer, only Bill was welcomed to Conference. They will relocate in the Denver, Colorado, area for church planting.

September missionaries of the month are the leaders of home mission classes: Jim and Lois Sluss, Pat and Kathy Velanzon, and Ken and Gretchen Cutrer.

Jim and Lois returned to the Krypton, Kentucky, area one year ago. Jim worked for several years in Krypton with Margaret Lowery, and Lois's home is nearby. They are the natural leaders to revive the Krypton church. The people show pride in their church by physical improvements and increased attendance.

The 340 Class is an outgrowth of the Bethlehem, Virginia, congregation, pastored by Pat Velanzon. This class is "on the move"—they are primarily truckers who meet on Route 340.

The University Church, pastored by Ken Cutrer since its beginning, was given church status by General Conference. We rejoice with them.

The October missionaries-of-the-month are Maria Miranda and Allen

Baer. María's very successful radio broadcast in Spanish reaches millions daily throughout Latin America and other parts of the world. Allen, from the Goshen, Indiana, congregation, is the only Brethren missionary in Argentina at this time. He is a tent-maker; teaching English is his profession. He serves in many capacities in the church, as well as being the on-site overseer for the denomination. Pray for the specific needs for each of these pastors and missionaries.

In mid-September Jim Black will begin his 7-week trip to Asia. Pray for his safety and good health, as well as contacts and decisions which will be made with national missionaries.

The home mission pastors and workers are the November missionaries-of-the-month.

The new address for Tim and Jan Eagle is:

Calle 32 No. 32 A-2
Col. Independencia
Naucalpan, Edo. de Mexico
C.P. 53830
MEXICO

Todd and Tracy Ruggles' new address is:

Popocatepetl #22-2
Ricardo Flores Magon
Naucalpan, Edo. de Mexico
C.P. 53820
MEXICO

They appreciate your cards and letters.



THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

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Woman's Outlook Newsletter

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WMS CONFERENCE

Think of the hymn tune "Father, We Thank Thee for the Night" and sing these words:

When the Lord calls you, Come, follow Him.

Just let Him live within your heart always,

*And be His witness from day to day
He'll walk before you, Leading the way.*

This was the theme song for the week. The words were written by Maralene Trainer (Huntington). Sandra Medsger (Roann), song leader, and Marjorie Bennett (Muncie), pianist, led us into worship with this beautiful chorus. Since the words are meaningful and the tune is familiar and singable, I suggest you use it occasionally in your meetings.

"Witnessing with Power" was the theme for the women's meetings. Charlene Rowser (Goshen) developed the theme in her daily devotions, and her talks will be included in the *Newsletters*.

BUSINESS

The committees and the results of their efforts are:

Credential: Anita Hollewell (Lanark) and Matilda Stout (Peru). Total delegates, officers, and registered guests were 138.

Nominating: Corine Austin (Fort Wayne), Cindy Stout (Burlington), and Pat Lusch (Huntington). The elected officers are President—Shirley Black (Ashland Park St.); Vice President—Judy Tinkel (Milford); Financial Secretary—Joanne Kroft (Ashland Garber); Treasurer—JoAnn Seaman (Ashland Park St.)

Auditing: Sherry Van Duyne (Ashland Park St.) and Lois Barnhart (Gratis). The books of the financial secretary and the literature secretaries were in good order. The treasurer's books were checked by an outside auditor.

ABCs: These are the Annual Basic Commitments for individuals and societies. We sometimes call them "goals"—the foundation for personal and corporate growth.

For Individuals:

1. Have personal daily devotions, including Bible reading and prayer.
2. Personally invite at least one non-member, including high school girls, to your regular meetings.
3. Read two suggested books.

For the Society:

4. Sponsor a special ministry, service, or activity in which:
 - a. The purpose of WMS is promoted.
 - b. An offering is received for the Seminary.
5. Offerings and dues: (All checks should be made payable to the National WMS and sent to the Financial Secretary: Joanne Kroft, 608 Twp. Rd. 1151; Route 5, Ashland, Ohio 44805.)
 - a. National dues of \$7.50 per member paid by October 31. Send with the revised *Newsletter* subscription list.
 - b. Offering for the Seminary any time during the year.
 - c. Thank Offering for benevolences and Project Offering, if not brought to National Conference.
6. Promote work for World Relief; follow suggestions in the WMS Service Guide for other benevolences.
7. Correspond regularly with Home and Foreign missionaries.
8. Support the growth of the children and/or youth ministries of your church with prayers, finances, and leadership.
9. Evaluate your society's accomplishments in a written summary to your District President by July 1.

Special Challenge:

10. Set up a plan to personally encourage and nurture the girls and young women of your church.

You may notice the Board divided No. 4, which gives an extra commitment. No. 10, the special challenge, is essential to develop women's leadership, impress upon them the responsibilities of our church, seek their commitment and loyalty, and replenish our own ranks. The Sisterhood of Mary and Martha was the feeder for WMS. Now we need to encourage the girls and young ladies by other means, and this is the purpose of the Special Challenge.

Financial reports to date are:

Project: \$11,271.17 for the Girls' Orphanage in India. This concludes the two-year project. Last year's offering was \$11,794, so we surpassed our goal of \$22,000! We have made a significant difference in the lives of 20 poor and disadvantaged Indian girls!

New Project: Malaysia is the mission field concentration for the next two years. The project is to establish an endowment fund for the preparation of

national leaders for the ministry. The two-year goal is \$25,000. Project offerings will be invested as the endowment principal and the interest earned will be used for the training.

The door is opening slowly in Malaysia after years of strict political hindrances. David and Jenny Loi and other national workers have persevered patiently. Continue praying for them.

Thank Offering: \$9,147.20 This money is distributed among the benevolences listed in the detailed budget—missions: world and home, at the discretion of the Missionary Board; and Christian education: Riverside, Campus Ministry, the Seminary, and the AU scholarship.

Dues: There is no change in the annual dues per member. This money is used for Publications and Other Expenses.

Budget: The budget proposed by the Board was adopted:

Benevolences	\$18,720
ATS (public service)	\$5,940
World/Home Missions	8,780
Campus Ministry	1,500
Riverside Christian	
School	1,500
Scholarship, AU	1,000
Publications	8,270
Newsletter	
Devotional Guide	
Other Expenses	1,810
Administrative	
Social Security	
Gifts and Conference	
Total	\$28,800

The budget is \$400 less than last year, due, in part, to a decrease in membership.

Appointed Officers: The Board's recommendations were approved:

General Secretary, Grace Grumbling
 Assistant, Trudy Kerner
 Sewing and World Relief Coordinator, Joan Merrill
 Editor, *Newsletter*, Joan Ronk
 Editor, *Devotional Guide*, Jeanette Sullivan
 Subscription Secretary, Ginny Hoyt
 Literature Secretary, Kathleen Mack
 Assistant, Doris Shultz

Scholarship: The Board awarded the Scholarship to Annalee Hoover from the North Georgetown Church. Annalee is a senior, with a double major: biology and religion. The WMS scholarship is given to a senior in good standing at Ashland University.

(continued on page 4)

Highlights (continued)

Devotional Guide. Once again Jeanette Sullivan has prepared a special *Devotional Guide*. The theme is based on the hymn, "Living for Jesus," and the articles are written by women in various walks of life who live in various parts of the world. The monthly feature is prepared by Lucille Woesner, an 85-year-old member of the Milledgeville society. Lucille's original poems, her favorite recipes, and 43 great ideas for Mother-Daughter banquets in May are the extraordinary features of the Guide. The programs will certainly help us "Live for Jesus."

SPECIALS

The luncheon Wednesday noon was attended by nearly 300 ladies. The Hagerstown ladies made the programs: light blue with a white dove in flight, depicting the theme of "Witnessing with Power." The Huntington ladies made large Victorian-style fans, decorated with flowers and beads, for the centerpieces and small fans with a magnet for individual favors. They were lovely.

The luncheon was delicious: chicken *à la king* in a pastry shell, tossed salad, rolls, beverage, and frozen yogurt.

The program was a surprise. We all knew Helen had scheduled Suzanne Barr (Mansfield) to portray Suzy Kay at Conference. However, we had been told that Suzanne lost her voice. We believed her, and yet, it was almost typical of Suzy Kay—a fictional, very precocious child! But it was true!

Helen implemented Plan B and introduced past missionaries (Chantal Logan and Enid Schrader), present missionary (Diane Kerner), and future missionaries (Jan Eagle and Tracy Ruggles). Each recounted experiences from a missionary woman's viewpoint.

Chantal talked of what a missionary faces: immigration laws, materialism, and racial prejudice. Her real-life experiences were humorous and serious.

Enid recently returned from serving two years as a housemother for handicapped people (ages 5-91) in Israel. Diane's personal ministry is as a wife, mother, and teacher of elementary children. Tracy and Jan spoke of life with their Mexican families, language school, moving and buying furnishings. They summed up their attitudes as: awe, frustration, and adjustment. They were very appreciative of prayer.

Special music was presented by April Lowmaster. Singing her original songs with her soft guitar accompaniment, she pleased the ladies. Her songs were "Friends," "Before It's Too Late," and "Start with Me, Lord."

The Nappanee ladies received the Thank Offering. Roseanna Maust made an analogy of making a quilt and the project offering: many hands, large and small sizes, beautiful colors, and a variety of patterns. Mesu Andrews called the societies to present their offerings, while Nancy Hunn played soft music. A cablegram of thanks was read from Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar.

During the afternoon service, ladies from the Central District presented the memorial service. Anita Hollewell, Dorothy Nelson, Jeanette Sullivan, Nola Cunningham, Melva Staples, and Velma Condreay participated with appropriate scriptures and readings. Flowers were arranged for the 35 deceased members.

Special musical numbers throughout the Conference were presented by Susie Black (New Lebanon) singing "O Calvary's Lamb," accompanied by Nancy Hunn (Nappanee); Jill and Kevin Van Duyne (Roann), who sang "Standing on the Promises" and "Jesus Will Come Again"; and Joan Ronk (Ashland), who played a piano solo, "In This Very Room."

Auction. Tom McConahay auctioned beautiful tote bags, large-size and baby-size quilts, and a comforter handmade by ladies in Berlin, Mt. Olive, and Ashland. This is a fun event and netted \$590 for missions.

Installation. The officers were installed by Russ Gordon, moderator-elect. He charged the officers and the members-at-large to declare the praises of God, because we are a chosen people (1 Peter 2:9).

HERE'S AN IDEA!

Ruby Bates (Wayne Heights) suggests: Visit the care-givers. Frequently we remember those who are confined to their homes—the shut-ins—with cards and holiday gifts. But those who care for the shut-ins are also "shut in" and need a phone call, a house call, or a holiday remembrance. Encourage the care-givers.

Copy favorite Bible verses on index cards and file them under topical headings in a recipe box. Our leader, Marilyn Burkey (Ashland Joy), fit five cards from her "Courage" category onto a page, copied them, and distributed six pages to us. We talked about them—our favorites and why they were helpful. Depending upon your various moods, select a category from your Prescription for Feelings (recipe box) and "think on these."

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

Conference 1993 is over and beginning! The official days of meeting together concluded August 6. Greetings and farewells were given with promises of letters, thoughts, and prayers for others, as well as promises and resolutions to make a difference with the inspiration received. That is the "beginning" part.

Inspiration and fellowship are two important ingredients of the Brethren Conference. Inspiration is my link with God, the vertical position, and fellowship is the horizontal level with people. These two distinctions are evident in all phases of our lives and should be realized in this manner—that our vertical relationship with God is paramount to our relationship with others, even with fellow believers. I urge you to keep these in perspective in your worship services, WMS meetings, and your personal life—family and work.


Many good ideas were presented; listen to your delegate's report and implement those which will help you. Present better-planned programs. Stop doing business as usual. Publicize or perish (especially if you have dwindling attendance).

Since the *Devotional Guide* doesn't list the Missionary-of-the-Month, I will provide information about them for the current months covered by the *Newsletter* (for example, September and October for this issue), and only mention the missionary for the following month; i.e., November—home missions and special ministries.

Labor Day is considered as the end of summer and the beginning of fall, although not according to the official calendar. If you joke about Labor Day being a holiday from work, then think about this on the following day: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3:23).

Remember, too, that we are all in this together. Mother Teresa reminded me that work is a cooperative effort; "I can do something you can't do and you can do something I can't do. But we both have to do it."

Your friend,


Joan

them organize a national day of prayer and reconciliation workshop, held in June of this year. Despite the great need for food and water in that country, pastors felt that the greatest need was for help in bringing reconciliation.

His second example was Croatia, where the evangelical church is considered neutral. There, with the help of World Relief and other agencies, the church is administering relief to Moslems, Orthodox Christians, Catholics, everyone. As a result, people are turning to Christianity in *droves*.

His third example was from much closer home—Des Moines, Iowa—where World Relief is helping a coalition of churches organize the Christian Relief Effort, a uniquely Christian response to the flood in that area. The churches of the area are providing volunteers to do clean up and give other help, and World Relief is providing cleaning supplies, construction materi-

als, and money for vouchers for needed professional services.

Loudon concluded his message by reminding Brethren that we are a part of these efforts because we are a part of the body of Christ. He said that he wants every Brethren person to feel a part of World Relief, to "own it." As Brethren minister to World Relief, he said, World Relief in turn ministers to others by helping the church be the church, which includes being involved in social action ministry. [†]



David Loudon (r.) chats with Enid Schrader and Rev. Robert Schubert following the World Relief Luncheon.

New Moderator Russell Gordon

"Somewhere this week I heard someone say that this week is a wake-up call for The Brethren Church. And I believe it is," said the newly installed General Conference moderator, Rev. Russell Gordon, in a message that concluded the 105th General Conference of The Brethren Church. "[It is] a wake-up call to the realities of the world around us," he continued.

Alluding to those realities, he asked what is 750,000 miles long, reaches

around the earth 30 times, and grows 20 miles longer each day. It is the line of people who are without the Lord Jesus Christ.

In order for those people to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, we must shout it out, we must declare it to them, Gordon continued. Thus the theme for the 1994 Conference year is "Called to Declare," based on 1 Peter 2:9, he said. "I believe the wake-up call that started sounding loud and

clear Monday evening and is continuing even now is the 'Call to Declare,'" he said. "To declare the message of salvation that is possible to every single person because of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for each of them."

"I challenge you this year to hear the call, to wake up, and to declare that love of Jesus Christ, the love of the one that loved you enough to bring *you* out of darkness," the new moderator said. He added that his prayer is that Brethren will be *looking for* ways to share the gospel. "Brethren, that's our wake-up call," he said. [†]



New moderator Russell Gordon (c.) with his wife, Sherrie, and son, Ryan.

At the Missionary Banquet on Thursday evening of Conference, Missionary Board president Dr. Arden Gilmer (r.) presented mission-



aries Bill (l.) and Sharon Winter (who was unable to attend Conference) a plaque in appreciation for their 21 years of missionary service in Argentina. The Winters have terminated their service in Argentina and feel called to serve as tentmakers in a Brethren church-planting effort in the Denver, Colorado, area.

Conference Business Sessions

GCEC Recommendation 1

The proposed change in national office organization and finances recommended by the General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) (*see pages 11-13 of the July/August EVANGELIST*) was the major topic of discussion during Conference business sessions. After the recommendation was brought to the floor during the Wednesday business session, delegates were given an opportunity to discuss it in small groups and to bring back questions to a panel made up of GCEC members.

It soon became evident that the recommendation was not widely supported and that delegates were more interested in discussing the poor financial support from churches, which made the recommendation necessary, than in discussing the recommendation itself. The Wednesday business session ended with no action having been taken on the recommendation.

Unofficial discussions continued throughout the day. That evening, several persons proposed that an outside consultant be hired to study the organization and finances of The Brethren Church before any reorganization take place. In addition, *these people committed themselves to raise the money to hire the consultant.*

This proposal was set before GCEC during its meeting at 6:30 a.m. on Thursday. Following discussion, the Executive Council developed the following motion, which it presented to Conference later that morning:

That we authorize the moderator to appoint a committee of two GCEC members and three non-GCEC members (including a representative from the Missionary Board) to hire and work with an outside facilitator to develop comprehensive strategies for long-range and short-range financial and organizational planning in The Brethren Church, based upon the priorities we have established for our ministries, this report to be completed by January 1994.

The motion received a generally favorable reaction from delegates and, after some discussion, was approved.

Excellent Spirit

An excellent spirit prevailed during the business sessions of Conference, as was the case throughout Conference week. Delegates dealt with some challenging issues, and particularly the recommendation concerning national office organization and finances, peaceably and in an attitude of good will. This was due at least in part to the way Conference week and each day of the week began—with Brethren spending extended periods of time together in prayer.

And the importance of prayer was not lost during the business session. At a critical point in the proceedings, before taking a vote on the motion to hire a facilitator to help develop comprehensive strategies for the church, Conference took a ten-minute time out to pray about the issue.

Immediately thereafter, a follow-up motion was made from the floor: *That the local Brethren churches and pastors understand that they have a moral and spiritual obligation to pay their fair share for fulfilling the ministry of The Brethren Church, and that the GCEC find ways to express this vision of accountability to the local churches.* This motion was also approved.

Congressional petition

Delegates took decisive action in the waning minutes of Conference, when they approved with little discussion a

Conference Offerings

Delegates to Conference were more than generous during the week. They gave nearly \$4,700 toward Conference expenses, plus more than \$2,200 in an offering for Concerts of Prayer International. And \$1,990 was received at the World Relief Soup Luncheon in an offering that will go to World Relief of NAE for Midwest flood relief. Besides the offerings, another \$590 was raised for Brethren missions through a quilt auction sponsored by the National W.M.S.

motion to send the following petition to the members of the United States Congress:

The 105th General Conference of The Brethren Church opposes SB25, HR25, HR4, and any other legislation before the Senate or House of Representatives which would encourage abortion, pay for abortions, or limit a state's rights to regulate abortions. It also opposes any legislation which in any way promotes or allows fetal tissue research. Further, the Conference opposes HR431 and any other legislation which would present homosexuality or lesbianism as a civil rights issue. It opposes making "sexual preferences" a civil rights issue. It does not, and will not, support any legislation which seeks to condone or encourage any sexual activity that the Bible defines as immoral.

New Church

The University Church, which meets on the Ashland University campus, was elevated from a class to full church status. This congregation, which began on November 3, 1991, averaged 100 in its worship services during 1992. Rev. Ken Cutrer is the pastor.

Elections

Rev. Reilly Smith was declared elected (he ran unopposed) as the 1993-94 moderator-elect. Rev. Smith is pastor of the Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church and just completed a 3-year term as West Region representative on GCEC. He is also a member of the Missionary Board.

Also elected to GCEC were Rev. Gene Eckerley, Indiana District Elder and pastor of the Mishawaka, Ind., Community Brethren Church (member at-large); David West, pastor of Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson, Ariz. (West Region representative); and Jeanette Sullivan, a member (and wife of the pastor of the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church (Plains Region representative, to complete the one year remaining in the term of the late Mark Baker).

The following were elected to the commissions:

Spiritual Formation—Mary Ellen Drushal (ch.), Carolyn Cooksey, Jerry Flora, Dee Keplinger, and Brian Moore.

Evangelism and Church Growth—Lee Solomon (ch.), Randy Saultz, Mike Woods, Cindy Smith, and Steve Cole.

Leadership Development—Kerry Scott (ch.), Jim Hollinger, Charles Munson, Kurt Stout, and Sherry Van Duyne.

New Booklet

The report "How Brethren Understand the Bible" from the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication was discussed, given minor revisions, then accepted. This document, retitled *How Brethren Understand God's Word*, will now be printed and made available in booklet form.

Cooperative ministry

Conference approved GCEC Recommendation 2, that *General Conference elect a special seven-member committee (five elders, 1 layman, 1 laywoman) to explore the possibility of closer ties and cooperative ministry with a like-minded denomination that shares our vision, such as the Brethren in Christ*. An amendment to include the words *or merger after cooperative ministry* was "soundly defeated." Members elected to this committee are elders Richard Allison, Arden Gilmer, Brian Moore, Jim Rowsey, and Dale Stoffer; layman Jim Hollinger; and laywoman Brenda Colijn.

Credential fees

A GCEC recommendation that General Conference credential fees be raised from \$30 to \$50 was adopted.

Statistical Report

Brethren at the end of 1992 numbered 13,132 in 124 organizations (117 churches, 3 mission congregations, 4 classes). This was 190 fewer members than a year earlier (13,322), but still 72 more than at the end of 1990 (13,060). Average worship attendance (11,099) in 1992 was also down from 1991 levels (11,292). In fact, according to Statistician Ralph McBride, attendances were down in every category except for children and youth groups. On the positive side, giving showed an increase in nearly every category listed on the financial summary.



Voting members of General Conference Executive Council, photographed during their installation, are (l. to r.) new moderator Russ Gordon, Pat Velanzon, past moderator Glenn Grumbling, moderator-elect Reilly Smith, Gene Eckerley, Brenda Colijn, David Stone, Jim Miller, Jan Sullivan, and (not in the picture) Dave West.

This was with the understanding that delegate fees would now cover the entire cost of Conference, including planning and administration, and that future Conference offerings would be used for special ministries, and not for Conference expenses. (Note: Credential fees are paid by the churches, and not by delegates themselves. Each church is responsible for payment of credential fees for each ordained Brethren elder who is a member of the congregation and for all lay delegates to which it is entitled. A church is entitled to two delegates for its first 50 members or fraction thereof, and an additional delegate for every additional 50 members or fraction over 25.)

100 percent churches

Thirty-seven churches were presented certificates of appreciation for giving 100 percent or more of their Fair Share for Brethren Church ministries in 1992. The churches, *by district*, were—*Florida*: St. Petersburg; *Southeastern*: Bethlehem, Liberty, Linwood, St. James; *Pennsylvania*: Johnstown Third, Pleasant View, Sarver, Valley, Wayne Heights; *Ohio*: Garber, Gratis, Gretna, Louisville First, New Lebanon, Park Street, Smithville, Smoky Row; *Indiana*: Brighton Chapel, Dutchtown, Elkhart, Jefferson, Kokomo (356%), New Paris, North Manchester, Oakville, Peru, Roanoke, Teegarden, Wabash, Warsaw; *Central*: Lanark, Waterloo; *Midwest*: Mulvane; *Southwest*: Northwest Chapel, Tucson; *California*: Northgate. Three other churches recognized for giving very close to 100 percent were Mt. Olive (99%), Roann (99%), and St. Luke (98%).

Delegate totals

Registered delegates totaled 431—161 ministerial (41 in absentia), 237 lay, 23 district, and 10 cooperative. [†]

1994 Planning Budget

Support and Revenue

Support

Fair Share*	\$415,000
Contributions & Bequests	60,000
Total Support*	475,000

Revenue

Fees for Memberships & Conferences	73,000
Fees for Materials	150,000
Investment Income	20,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,000
Total Revenue	244,000

Total Support & Revenue 719,000

Expenses

Designated Distributions	100,500
Materials	116,000
Printing, Travel, Rent, Equipment, Depreciation, Legal, & Interest	129,000
Salaries & Related	202,000
Meetings and Ministry Projects	75,000
General Conference	30,500
Total Expenses	\$653,000

Excess of Support & Revenues Over Expenses* 66,000

*Figured on the basis of full Fair Share support from all churches. If only 70% of Fair Share support is received (about what it has been in recent years), Fair Share support would be \$222,000, resulting in a *shortfall* of \$29,000. To achieve a balanced budget, 79% of full Fair Share support would need to be received.

General Conference Auxiliaries

Brethren Men of Mission

Past accomplishments and future challenges were set before the Brethren Men of Mission (BMOM) during their sessions at General Conference.

Dorman Ronk reported on accomplishments during the summer at Riverside Christian Training School on the Men of Mission work project to complete the new classroom building there. He said that approximately 70 people had helped with the project and that, as a result, the building was nearly finished, with only a few projects remaining.

Doren Hostetler, administrator at Riverside, was at the session to thank the men for their work. He said that he hoped the school would be able to use the building when classes began on August 18.

BMOM president Ken Van Duyne expressed his appreciation for what the Men of Mission have accomplished in the past several years. At the same time, he spoke about his frustrations, frustration over the small number of men at the Conference sessions, their seeming lack of progress, and the feeling of complacency among the men.

Men of Mission are making a difference, but he challenged them to make a bigger difference by hearing and following God's calling. He specifically challenged the men to (1) be involved in a one-on-one discipling program with at least one other person; (2) take a stand for Christian standards in their communities; and (3) take an interest in a young person in their church.

The men took a stand on one current issue during their sessions. Curt Hamel informed the men of a new television series to begin airing on ABC this fall called *NYPD Blue*, which is expected to be the first "R-rated" series on network TV. He encouraged the men to take back to their churches for signatures copies of a petition asking local ABC affiliates not to air the show. The men also instructed the BMOM executive committee to write a letter to the national headquarters of ABC protesting the airing of *NYPD Blue*.

Perhaps the biggest challenge set before the men during their meeting was the project goal for 1993-94. The men adopted a goal to raise \$10,000 during the coming year for capital improvements at Riverside Christian School.

In addition to their two business sessions, the Men of Mission held a picnic at noon on Wednesday of Conference

week, at which they were joined by the pastors. After the meal, Professor Kenneth Walther of Ashland Theological Seminary gave a brief slide and narration introduction to biblical archaeology and to the seminary's new Flora Archaeological Center, which had just been dedicated that morning in honor of Dr. Delbert and Romaine Flora. Following this introductory lecture, Dr. Walther led the men on a tour of the Flora Archaeological Center. [✠]

Association of Brethren Elders

Dr. David Bryant, the General Conference inspirational speaker, spoke to Brethren elders at the Tuesday meeting of the Elders' Association. Believing that in most churches God has already prepared a core group of people for meaningful prayer, Dr. Bryant set forth a plan by which pastors could get these people and others in the church engaged in a one-month or one-year movement of prayer for revival.

He recommended getting people involved in prayer at four levels: (1) closet (personal) prayer—asking people to make a commitment to pray five minutes a day specifically for revival; (2) cluster (cell) prayer—(a) in family units, praying five minutes a day for revival, and (b) in prayer triplets, three people from different units (families) meeting once a week for ten minutes of prayer; (3) congregational prayer—(a) spending ten minutes in the worship service to pray for concerns related to revival, and (b) having monthly local church Concerts of Prayer; (4) Concerts of Prayer in the community, held twice a year, with people from the churches of the community coming together to pray.

Dr. Bryant said that this kind of prayer movement increases not only praying but also commitment. People who pray for revival become a part of the answers to their prayers as they become workers in God's harvest.

Following this presentation and a short question and answer period, Dr. Bryant led the elders through a season of prayer.

During their session on Thursday, the elders presented memorials, elected officers, heard reports, and took care of other association business.

Memorials were presented for elders W.E. Thomas and Mark Baker, who died during the past year. Elder David Benshoff also spoke about his son, Dustin, who died unexpectedly just days before Conference.

In the elections, Gene Eckerley and Gerald Barr were re-elected president and secretary-treasurer respectively. Dennis Sigle was elected vice-president and Richard Craver was chosen to be assistant secretary-treasurer.

Plans for future pastors' conferences were reviewed. The 1994 "Pastoral Family Retreat" is scheduled for April 19-21 at the Brown County State Park near Nashville, Ind. Featured speakers will be Dr. Charles Lake, founding pastor of Community Church of Greenwood, a unique congregation ministering in the Greenwood Ind., community; and Dr. Jay Kesler, president of Taylor University and a well-known author.

Looking ahead to the following year, the 1995 conference is tentatively scheduled for April 25-27 at Beulah Beach (on Lake Erie), Ohio. [✠]

W.M.S. Sessions

A report of the Woman's Missionary Society sessions at General Conference is included in *The Woman's Outlook Newsletter*, which is in the center of this issue of the EVANGELIST.

The BYIC Convention

National Brethren Youth in Christ held what will be remembered as one of their best Conventions ever! Approximately 105 youth from all over the nation gathered for a week of worship and spiritual revitalization.

This year has been a good one for the BYIC. The Lord has truly blessed the youth and their program. During 1993, the youth have seen an increase of 192 new members, bringing this year's total BYIC registration to 830 youth!

The 1993 BYIC budget was set at \$6,500, but we went well over this, receiving more than \$11,000 for our National BYIC Ingathering. Our thanks to the youth for all their hard work and dedication to this year's goal. Our 1993 BYIC project, Riverside Christian Training School, will receive a generous portion of our ingathering moneys.

Some other highlights of the week included the post-high joining the adults for the Concert of Prayer and for their business sessions; a panel discussion of the Brethren stand on contemporary issues; a missions banquet at which Dave Kerner, Brethren missionary to Colombia, brought forth a challenge to the youth; and Communion, led by Charles Munson and Mark Ray.



BYIC Steering Committee members for 1994, shown here as they were being installed, are (l. to r.) Tony Price, Sarah Hollewell, Stacy Oligee, Chad Geaslen, Jaime Gillespie, Christy Sigle, and Dawn Kidd.

The youth also participated in seminars on worship and on lukewarm Christians (how not to be one!); the Crusader Review; a Coffeehouse; youth worship services including morning praise; share and prayer groups; and an outdoor concert by Lee Behnken.

The Convention concluded with a special business session on Friday morning at which we voted to give the adults a \$2,000 love gift to help them with their budget. The 1994 Steering

Committee was also announced: Chad Geaslen, Fremont; Jaime Gillespie, Vinco; Sarah Hollewell, Lanark; Dawn Kidd, Bethlehem; Stacy Oligee, West Alexandria; Tony Price, New Lebanon; and Christy Sigle, Burlington. The BYIC Steering Committee is responsible for evaluating and planning the BYIC Convention and is also a brainstorming group for the National BYIC.

Begin planning now for another great BYIC Convention August 8-12, 1994!

— Tony Price

Tony, a member of the BYIC Steering Committee, is a senior at Ashland University.

The BYIC Ingathering

Holding the trophy presented to the Lanark, Ill., BYIC for raising the most money for the 1993 BYIC budget and project are (l. to r.) Sarah Hollewell, Brad Linboom, and Aaron Hollewell. The Lanark BYIC contributed \$6,500 to the ingathering, which was equal to the total amount expected from all the BYIC groups! Other top givers to the BYIC ingathering were New Lebanon, Ohio (\$962.18);



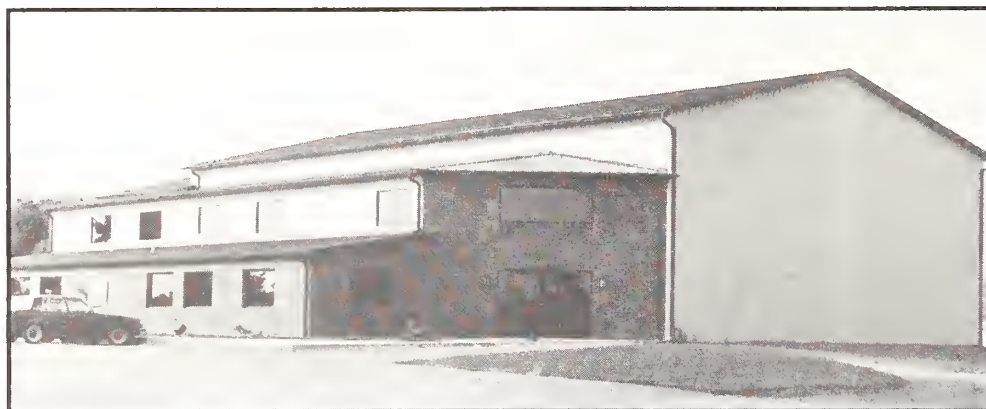
North Manchester, Ind. (\$621.42); Milledgeville, Ill. (\$550); and Jefferson, Ind. (\$500). As of August 20 a total of \$11,794.70 had been received for the Ingathering.

Special Recognition

During the Friday morning combined adult and youth closing service of Conference, the five largest BYIC groups in the denomination were recognized. They are:

New Lebanon:	73 members
Jefferson:	41 members
St. James:	40 members
North Manchester:	29 members
Milledgeville:	29 members

Special recognition was also given to the Vinco Sr. High and the Sarver BYIC groups for completing the 1993 local goals; and to the Tucson, Linwood, South Bend Jr., Roann, Bethlehem, Jefferson, New Lebanon, and Milledgeville Sr. High, Jr. High, and 4th-5th BYIC groups for participating in the goals program.



The Northview Brethren Life worship center. The main entrance is at the center of the photo; Sunday school rooms and offices are to the left; the multi-purpose area where worship services are held is behind the Sunday school rooms.

Northview Brethren Life Church Dedicates New Worship Center

Springboro, Ohio — A dedication service was held Sunday afternoon, August 1, for the new worship center of the Northview Brethren Life Church.

The 13,200-square-foot worship center is the initial church building of this Home Mission congregation. The group, which began in March of 1989, used rented facilities during its first four years of meetings.

The building features a 60- by 100-foot multi-purpose area that is used for worship services, but which can also serve as a gymnasium. This multi-purpose area is capable of holding 700 people, but seating for a smaller number is currently being provided. A large stage

area along one side of the room serves as the platform for those leading worship services.

The building also contains six classrooms (two of which can be subdivided to make two additional classrooms) three offices, a kitchen/refreshment center, a racquetball court, and restrooms.

The building is of wood frame construction, with the front part and the entrance area encased in brick and the rest of the building covered with metal siding. The cost of the building was approximately \$330,000 plus hundreds of work-hours by members and friends of the congregation, who did most of the

construction work. Bill Scott, a member of the church, was construction supervisor, assisted by his son Mike.

Rev. Arch Nevins, pastor of Northview Brethren Life, led the dedication service. Comments were shared by Rev. Bob Westfall, who as chair of the Ohio District Mission Board in 1989 played an important role in getting this Home Mission church started; and by Rev. Russ Gordon, Director of Home Missions and Church Growth for The Brethren Church. Rev. Gene Hollinger, an elder in the congregation, led the responsive commitment of the building to God and offered a prayer of dedication for the facility.

The service also included segments of group singing; a time of recognition for those who have played an important part in the life of the church and in the construction of the building; a skit by the Pebble Players; a history of the congregation in slides; and a closing prayer by Pastor Nevins. Special music included solos by Adam Nevins (son of Pastor Nevins) and a duet by Pastor Nevins and Claudia Hurst.

Approximately 125 attended the dedication service, including visitors from a number of Brethren churches. Among the visitors was General Conference Moderator Glenn Grumbling and his wife, Nancy.

The new church building is located on Ohio Route 123 at Dearth Road, on the south side of Springboro, about two miles east of Interstate 75. The congregation currently averages over 100 in attendance.

Dolly Zerbe Honored for 11 Years of Service as Indiana W.M.S. President

Shipshewana, Ind. — Dolly Zerbe was honored June 5 at the Indiana District Conference by the Woman's Missionary Society for her 11 years as district W.M.S. president.

A poem was read in her honor which had been written for the occasion by Waneta Finster of the Peru First Brethren Church. The poem said, in part:

*How do we say "Thank you" to a gal
like you?
What tokens of our love can we share
with you?
We've boxed them all up and wrapped
them too
And tied them with a big ribbon of
blue!*

* * * * *

*Now reach into the box and you will find
The many gifts we have for you in our
hearts and mind.*

*"Thanks" for all you have done
"Strength" for the days to come.
"Peace" of heart when things go
wrong.*

*"Joy" of serving Him in song.
"Health" to do your daily tasks
And God to direct you is all we ask.*

The poem went on to describe another gift yet to come, "... a painting from the brush of Matilda Stout." Dolly was given the opportunity to choose one of several oil paintings by Matilda, an artist in the Peru First Brethren Church. This painting was then presented "officially" to Dolly on June 18, which happened to be both Dolly's and Matilda's birthdays.

Dolly is a member of the Loree First Brethren Church. She has now turned the responsibilities of Indiana Dis-

trict W.M.S. president over to Susie Stout, a member of the Peru Church.

— reported by Susie Stout



In appreciation for her 11 years as Indiana District W.M.S. president, Dolly Zerbe (r.) is presented a painting by artist Matilda Stout.

Seminary Archaeological Center Dedicated In Honor of Dr. Delbert and Romaine Flora

Ashland, Ohio — Dr. Delbert and Romaine Flora were honored August 4 for their loyalty and service to Ashland Theological Seminary by the dedication of the Flora Archaeological Center.

The dedication ceremony was held during Conference week, with many of the Brethren attending Conference present to join in honoring the Floras.

The Center houses more than 1,400 artifacts from biblical times. The majority of these are from the 1,200-piece Robert H. Smith Archaeological Collection, which Delbert and Romaine were principally responsible for securing. The Floras also served as curators of the artifacts, cataloging and photographing the entire collection.

In addition to the Smith Collection, a number of the artifacts were given to the seminary by the Floras themselves. These were from a collection they assembled during seven trips to the Holy Land between 1952 and 1974.

Delbert, who served the seminary as dean and professor of biblical studies from 1946 through 1979, was the first graduate (in 1931) of the seminary after it became a graduate school of theology. Two years earlier he had graduated from Ashland College, and that September had married Romaine, who has

been his constant companion and friend.

Together they served churches in Illinois, Indiana, and Pennsylvania before he was named a faculty member at the seminary in 1946. They also became the parents of three children—Guy, a schoolteacher (now retired and editor of a magazine); Jerry, a professor at the seminary; and John, a medical doctor.

Delbert served as dean of the seminary from 1953 to 1963. During that

Delbert and Romaine Flora with sons Jerry (l.) and Guy, and daughters-in-law (l. to r.) Julie, Pat, and Donna, (whose husband, John, could not be present for the dedication).



Tim Eagle Ordained to Brethren Eldership August 15th in Ashland University Chapel

Ashland, Ohio — Tim Eagle was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church and his wife, Jan, was consecrated as the wife of an elder in a service held August 15 in the Religious Life Center of the Ashland University Chapel.

Rev. and Mrs. Eagle are Brethren missionaries to Mexico. They spent six months earlier this year (January–July) in language training in Mexico, and the day after the ordination they flew to Mexico City to begin their ministry.

Tim (28) is the son of Lonnie and Ann (Lindower) Eagle of Galion, Ohio. He attended Ashland University (AU) and as a student joined the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church and committed his life to Christian service. He was active in campus ministry and the Summer Crusader program.

Following graduation from AU in 1987 with a B.A. degree in religion and philosophy, he entered Ashland Theological Seminary, from which he received in 1992 a Master of Divinity degree with

an emphasis in missions. While in seminary he helped lead the short term outreach ministry at Park Street Church.

Jan is the daughter of Don and LaVerne Zimmerly of Orrville, Ohio. She grew up in the Smithville, Ohio, Brethren Church, where she accepted Christ and became a member as a child.

She, likewise, attended Ashland University, graduating with a B.S. degree

in elementary education in 1988. That same year, on May 28, 1988, she and Tim were married. While Tim finished seminary, she did substitute teaching and took classes at the seminary in missions and Christian education.

Dr. Fred Finks, vice president of Ashland Theological Seminary, gave the message for the Eagles' ordination service. Also participating in the service were Rev. Ralph Gibson, Rev. David Cooksey, Dr. Arden Gilmer, and Rev. Jim Rowsey. Tom McConahay sang, and Mrs. Holly Finks served as pianist.

The dedication ceremony was hosted by Dr. Fred Finks, vice president of ATS. Others participating included Dr. Jerry Flora, Rev. David Cooksey, Thomas Stoffer, Rev. Ronald W. Waters, Dr. John Shultz, and Dr. Ken Walther.

Rev. Tim and Jan Eagle (c.) with Tim's parents, Lonnie and Ann Eagle (l.), and Jan's parents, Don and LaVerne Zimmerly.



From The



Grape Vine

In Memory

Warren Dosch, 72, August 25. Member of the Pleasant View Brethren Church and of the Men of Mission. Services by Pastor R. Keith Hensley.

Zelma Doggett, 101, August 21. Longtime member of the Park Street Brethren Church and of the Builders Sunday school class, and the oldest member of the congregation at the time of her death. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer, assisted by Mrs. Doggett's son, Rev. Dwight Doggett.

Irene M. Lutz, 85, August 19. Member for more than 30 years and deaconess of the Sarasota First Brethren Church. Services by pastor Daniel Gray and Mark Ray.

Glenn S. Miller, Sr., 73, August 12. Member of the Vinco Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Tomb.

Frances M. Miller, 80, August 2. Member for 23½ years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she served as a Sunday school teacher for many years and was a faithful member of the W.M.S. Services by Rev. John Horning, Rev. Jack Teeple, and Rev. Gary Keisling.

Anna M. Obermyer, 77, August 2. Member for 66½ years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she was also a faithful member of the W.M.S. Services by Dr. Earl Thomas.

Benjamin K. Brenner, 26, July 28. Member of the Gretna Brethren Church. Services by Rev. James F. Black and Rev. Rod Rodriguez.

Joseph B. Turner, 77, July 28. Member of the Mathias Brethren Church, where he had served as Sunday school superintendent and trustee. Services by Pastor Jerry Fike.

Gordon L. Clark, 67, July 18. Member for 40 years of the North Manchester First Brethren Church, where he served as an usher. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann and Rev. Robert Schmeiser.

Beulah Ridenour, 102, July 17. Member for 46 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she was also a member of the W.M.S. Services by Dr. Earl Thomas.

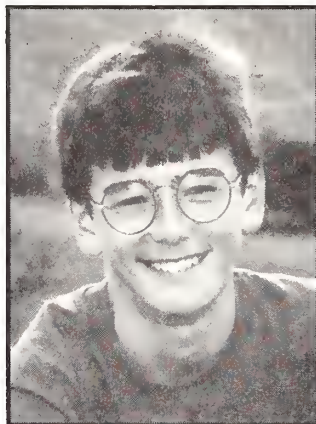
James Puterbaugh, 64, July 13. Member of the Park Street Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Arden Gilmer and Rev. Virgil Ingraham.

Weldon Worl, 82, July 11. Lifelong member of the Loree Brethren Church. The Worl family donated the land on which the Loree Church building stands. Services by Pastor James Thomas and Rev. Claude Stogsdill.

Esther Engles, 92, July 4. Member of the Lanark First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Garrett.

Mary Ellen Copeland, 77, July 2. Member for 45 years of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Brethren were saddened by the sudden and unexpected death July 22 of **Dustin G. Benshoff**, son of Rev. David and Deanna Benshoff. Dustin, 13,



was a member of the St. Luke Brethren Church near Woodstock, Va., where his father is the pastor. He would have been an 8th grader this fall at Woodstock Middle School. Death followed a severe asthma attack. Services by Rev. Mike Woods and Rev. Patrick Velanzon.

Contributions toward large medical expenses not covered by insurance may be sent to the "Dustin Benshoff Memorial Fund" in care of the St. Luke Brethren Church, Rt. 2, Box 197 A, Woodstock, VA 22664.

Pauline Smith, 80, July 1. Member for 67 years of the North Manchester First Brethren Church, where she was also a member of the Hadassah W.M.S. Circle and chair of the benevolence projects. Services by Rev. Woodrow Immel, deacons, and family members.

James Arthur Kiracofe, 69, June 17. Member since 1938 of the Gratis First Brethren Church, where he had served as Sunday school teacher, moderator, choir member, and member of Men of Mission. Services by Pastor Robert French.

Leslie A. Moore, 78, June 12. Member for 39 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Hazel Schwartz, 90, June 10. Longtime member of the Warsaw First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Mitchell Funkhouser.

Lee Buckman, 71, June 8. Member of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Fred Brandon.

Dorothy Conrad, 74, June 8. Member and deaconess for more than 40 years of the Corinth Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Bill Brady and Rev. G. Bright Hanna.

Marion Dietz, 86, June 8. Member for 52 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Norman Howard, Sr., 65, June 5. Member of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor David S. Olige.

Garoldine Bell, 70, May 23. Member for 12 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Walter L. Gaskin, 57, April 22. Member for 15 years of the New Paris First Brethren Church, where he served as chair of the Deacon Council, trustee, and member of the Christian Education Board. Services by Pastor Brad Hardesty and Rev. Robert Bischof.

Mary Ormston, 74, April 8. Member for 65 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Weddings

Christine Rhodes to **Aaron Violet**, August 21, in Martinsburg, Pa. Groom a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

Lauren J. Davis to **Douglas L. Culler**, August 14, in Hagerstown, Md. Groom a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

Janet Munson to **Jeff Paterson**, July 24, at the Milford First Brethren Church; Pastor Paul Tinkel officiating. Groom a member of the Milford First Brethren Church.

Joy Pearson to **Matthew Snell**, July 24, in Lincoln, Nebr. Groom a member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Kelly McCammon to **Jack Clark**, July 10, in Long Grove, Ill. Groom a member of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Debra Kay Chasteen to **Ryan Edward Nelson**, June 27, at Gratis First Brethren Church; Pastor Robert French officiating. Groom a member of the Gratis First Brethren Church.

Sondra Samples to **Terry Shopbell**, June 26, at the North Georgetown First Brethren Church; Pastor Fred Brandon officiating. Members of the North Georgetown First Brethren Church.

Lou Ann Wynne to **Christopher Perry**, June 25, at the West Alexandria First Brethren Church; Pastor David S. Olige officiating. Members of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church.

Ann Miller to **Dale McCauley**, June 12, at the North Manchester First Brethren Church; Pastor Marlin McCann officiating. Members of the North Manchester First Brethren Church.

Tracey Cooper to **Sean Kiracofe**, May 22, at the Gratis First Brethren Church; Pastor Robert French officiating. Groom a member of the Gratis First Brethren Church.

Deb Hisey to **Jay Baumgartner**, May 22, at the Milford First Brethren Church; Pastor Paul Tinkel officiating. Groom a member of the Milford First Brethren Church.

Goldenaires

Earl and Martha Humbarger, 50th, September 3. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Omer and Alice Lippold, 60th, September 3. Members of the Loree Brethren Church.

Walter and Helen Richter, 55th, August 20. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

Harry and Irene Tiger, 60th, July 29. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Charles and Betty McDevitt, 50th, July 25. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Otis and Vivian McCann, 60th, June 25. Members of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church.

Carl and Louise Zinn, 50th, May 16. Friends of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Mathias: 2 by baptism

St. James: 1 by baptism

Cerro Gordo: 6 by baptism

Pleasant View: 4 by baptism

Milledgeville: 10 by baptism

Corinth: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

New Lebanon: 3 by baptism, 2 by transfer

West Alexandria: 17 by baptism, 16 by transfer

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

Now that summer is almost over, it is time to begin thinking about harvesting crops. I usually pick apples toward the end of September to make applesauce and apple pies. My three boys like to go with me to pick apples. Daniel, who is two, can't reach the branches, so he picks up the apples that have fallen onto the ground. I can always tell which apples he has picked up. They are usually bruised, discolored, and sometimes wormy!

It is easy to tell which apples I want to keep. Nobody wants apples that look awful.

Jesus compares us to a tree and its fruit in Luke 6:43. He says that only good trees bear good fruit, and bad trees bear bad fruit. We should be like the tree that has only good fruit. The things we do and say should be good things that are pleasing to Jesus. Let's try to be trees that have good fruit — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. After all, who likes wormy fruit?!

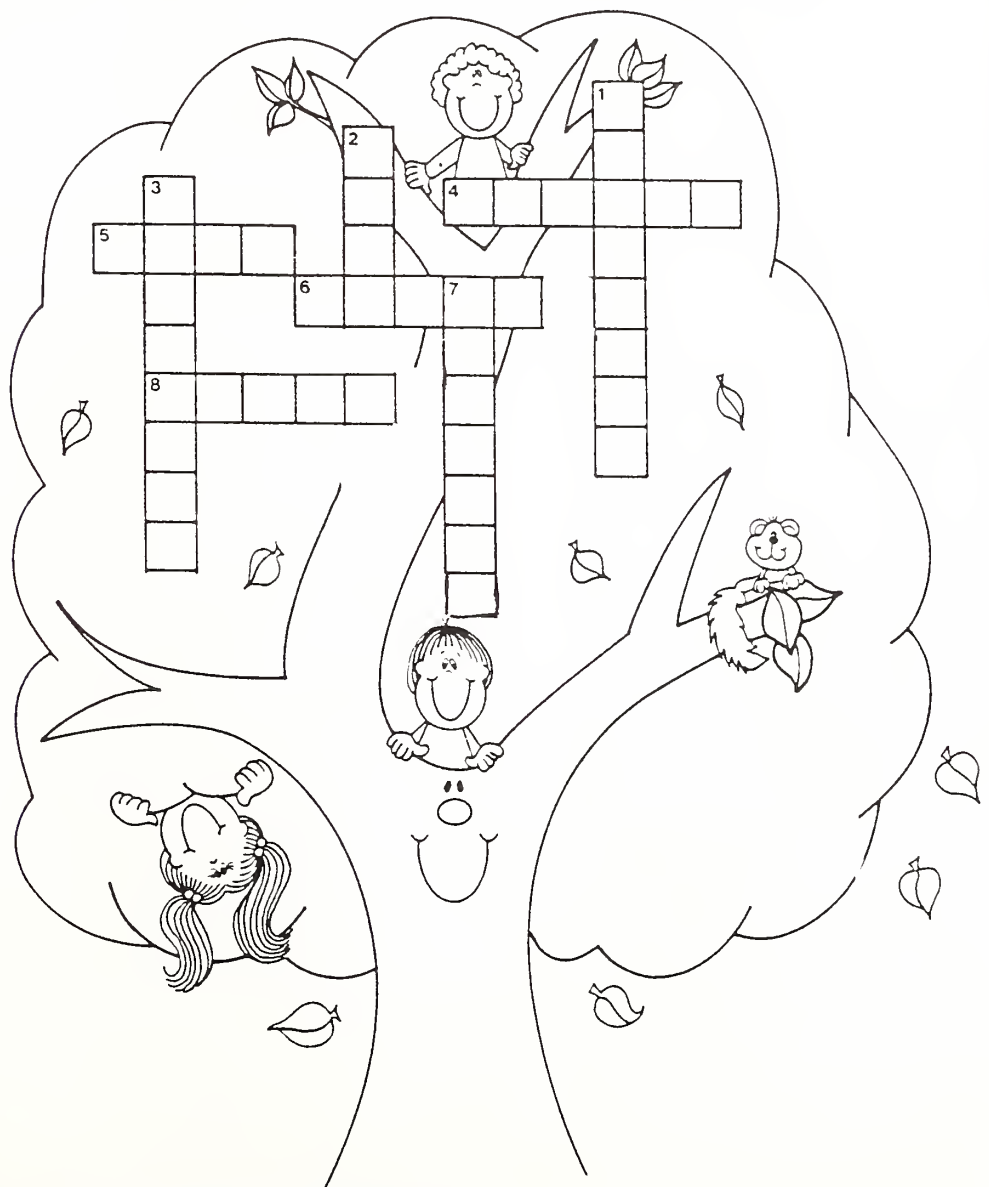
Crossword Clues

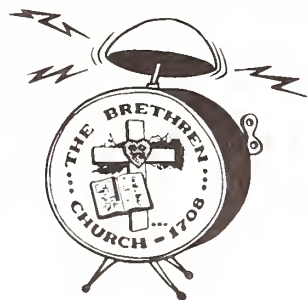
Across

4. Mild or tender; not pushy.
5. Jesus said that only _____ trees bear good fruit.
6. Not at war; not upset.
8. We should _____ bear bad fruit!

Down

1. Fruit of the spirit that means not getting angry when things go wrong or when we have to wait.
2. In _____ 6:43 Jesus talks about good and bad fruit.
3. Another word for helpfulness or for doing what is right.
7. Self-_____.





A Wake-Up Call!?

An update and a challenge by Ronald W. Waters,

Director of Brethren Church Ministries and Treasurer for
The Brethren Church.

PERHAPS the most commonly repeated phrase at this year's General Conference was "wake-up call." Some said it was time for the church to receive one. Others said that a General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) recommendation had sounded one. Still others asked if the church had heard one. New moderator Russ Gordon even sounded an alarm clock to symbolize one.

A wake-up call? To whom? For what?

The background

As treasurer for the denomination, I am responsible for preparing the annual planning budget for General Conference approval in August and a working budget for GCEC approval in December. The planning budget that Conference approves is generally based on 100 percent Fair Share financial support from Brethren churches.

But the fact of the matter is that not every church provides its full support. In fact, only about a third of the churches gave full support in 1992. And for the past several years, total financial support from all Brethren churches has averaged 70 percent or less of the full Fair Share!

So in the working budget I present to GCEC for approval, I have to trim out desirable ministries to allow for the anticipated shortfall in support from churches. Every year since 1990, I had been able to trim desired but non-essential programs and ministries in order to produce a balanced working budget. Such trimming meant we were not advancing much, but we were able to pretty much hold our own.

December 1992 was different. That's when I heard my "wake-up call" and sounded the alarm for GCEC. Each year we had trimmed the so-called "fat" from the budget. For 1993, we'd have to trim the "lean" as well, while facing a projected \$43,000 deficit by December 31, 1993. And the projections were for growing deficits in future years.

GCEC charged the moderator-track (moderator, moderator-elect, and past moderator) with reviewing the budget and proposing ways to trim the deficit. It quickly became apparent that to balance the budget now and in the future would require either (1) a significant infusion of new cash annually or (2) elimination of executive level personnel and ministries or (3) a combination of the above.

GCEC Recommendation 1 to General Conference (see *July/August 1993 EVANGELIST*, pages 11-13) proposed significant staff and ministry reductions and re-direction of some ministries to districts and to local churches. Through the course of the summer, it became apparent that many Brethren opposed such reductions. GCEC members themselves were uneasy with the implications of their recommendation. But opposing the proposed staff reductions would require an alternative plan.

So GCEC listened to Conference delegates, then presented a compromise proposal which Conference adopted, namely, to authorize the moderator to appoint a five-member committee (two from GCEC, one from the Missionary Board, and two others). This committee will hire and work with an

outside facilitator—a Christian who works with churches in similar circumstances—to develop comprehensive strategies for long- and short-term financial and organizational planning in The Brethren Church. These strategic plans are to be based on the priorities we have established for our ministries. The goal is for a completed report with recommendations by January 1994.

What about the "wake-up call"?

Several people expressed concern that we not "stick our head in the ground" and merely hope that our financial concerns would miraculously go away. God does work miracles in supernatural ways at times. But most of the time, He works His miracles through His people.

I believe that God has given The Brethren Church all the resources we need to accomplish His ministry among us and through us. The question is, Will we as individuals, congregations, districts, and national organizations make those resources available for ministry He wants us to do?

I once knew a Brethren church that had tens of thousands of dollars salted away in certificates of deposit. Their rationale—to be prepared for a rainy day. The truth was, there was not even a cloud on the horizon! Such thinking begs the question of where faith enters the picture. To paraphrase the proverb: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own bank account; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will direct your paths."

The proposal adopted by General Conference could be a good

plan. I'm not a prophet (I mistakenly typed "profit" at first. I'm not that either!), but I predict this committee's assessment will be similar to the one made by the moderator-track and GCEC. We must either increase revenue or decrease expenses or both.

Let's pray that they will devise a Spirit-inspired plan that will free us to do the ministry we want to do together as a denomination of churches.

What about the short-term?

The next 12 months are critical. They will tell whether we have heard a "wake-up call" and, if so, whether we will respond to it.

The following may give evidence to whether we are yet awake:

1. **Twenty-five additional churches will budget full Fair Share support for 1994.** That would bring the total number giving their full Fair Share to about one-half of all Brethren churches. Several congregations have already taken action to treat their Fair Share support as they do their utilities—it's something they pay without question. Some will do this even though it works a hardship on them. Most will find that once they make the commitment, God will abundantly supply the needed funds and more!

2. **Another twenty-five churches will significantly**

increase their percentage of Fair Share support for 1994. They will increase their support by 25 to 50 percentage points. Again, for some it will prove quite a challenge; for others, it will be easier than they could have imagined. Some will accomplish this by deciding to tithe the income the church receives, distributing that tithe among national and district ministries, with special over-and-above gifts for missions and World Relief.

3. **Two hundred Brethren families will become Partners and Friends of The Brethren Church.** Partners give at least "a tithe of a tithe"—one percent of their income—to The Brethren Church. Friends give \$10 per month.

4. **Seventy-five percent of all churches not budgeting full Fair Share support will take a "Have a Heart" offering in February to support outreach/evangelism ministries in The Brethren Church.** That support will be used primarily to provide the national office portion of the Passing On the Promise administrative and support expenses.

5. **Fifty Brethren will add The Brethren Church, Inc., to their wills during the year.** This is not a short-term solution—we'd like to have these Brethren around a while to help reach the lost in their communi-

ties for Christ. But it will be an indication that a number of folks want to keep supporting Brethren Church ministries after the Lord calls them home. Size of the estate and amount of the bequest is not as important as remembering the church. (How about a tithe of the estate for The Brethren Church, Inc., and an additional generous portion for missions and the seminary? Your kids will just spend it foolishly!)

6. **Ten new churches will provide THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST to all their members.** The added subscription income is not as important as the distribution of news and views to more Brethren people.

7. **Brethren people will give \$40,000 in additional support to The Brethren Church, Inc., during the coming year.** It may be one person giving \$40,000. It may be four at \$10,000. It may be 400 at \$100. It may be every Brethren family at \$5 each. What could you give that would not require you to reduce your local church or other giving?

Hear the "wake-up call"

Here's my challenge to you: **do something!** It does not have to be spectacular. It only has to be what the Lord is calling you to do. Just do it!

If you love the Lord and you love The Brethren Church, act now.

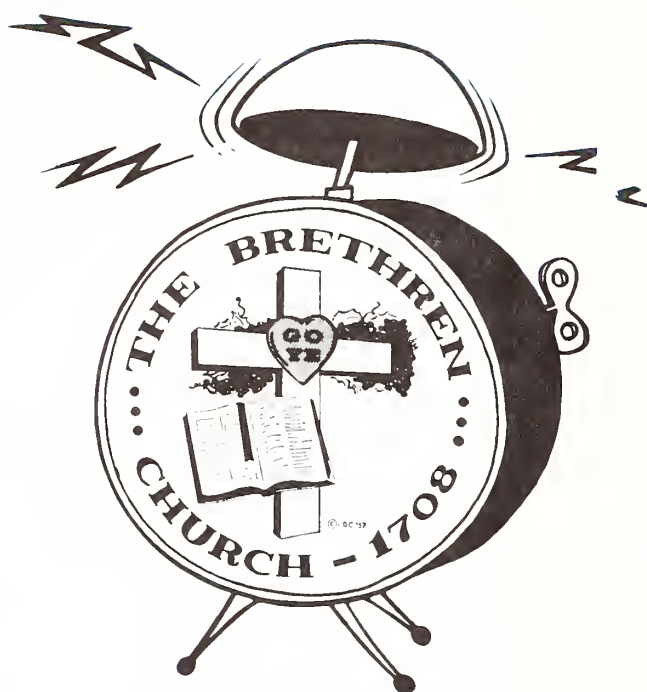
Ding-ding-ding! Ding-ding! [t]

September has been designated as YOUTH MONTH

Support your local youth by involving them in ministry opportunities within the local church, by participating in and supporting their fundraisers, and by encouraging them in their activities and service projects!

Also promote involvement in the District and National youth programs! Help your youth broaden their horizons by encouraging them to meet other Brethren youth within their districts and from across the country!





Ding-ding-ding! Ding-ding!

It's time to hear a "wake-up call" in The Brethren Church. If we expect to continue denominational ministries at the level to which we've become accustomed, we need to rally together to support those ministries with our finances.

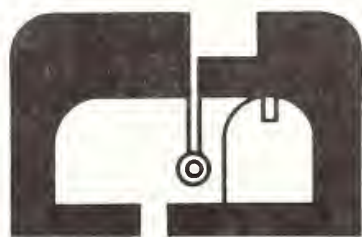
The purpose of denominational ministries is to do those things together that we are unable to do as separate congregations—to expand the ministry of Christ in our world, to disciple Brethren people toward spiritual maturity, and to equip them for outreach ministries to their communities and the world.

You'll soon receive a special mailing, offering you an opportunity to respond. There won't be just one way—you'll receive a menu of choices.

We're past the days of "breakfast in bed." It's time to answer the alarm and take positive action.

Be praying for how God would have you respond.

And
watch
your
mailbox!



The Brethren Church
partners in ministry

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THE BRETHREN Evangelist

OCTOBER 1993



Readers' Forum

A column in which readers can share their thoughts and views with the Brethren.

A Report on the Mission Project and Bibles for Nigeria

I am pleased to report that the National Christian Leadership Conference was held in Jos, Nigeria, May 25-30 and was tremendously successful. Approximately 300 Christian leaders from government, business, the clergy, and lay positions attended the conference. They came from many different states in Nigeria and from many different tribes.

The conference helped to unify Christian leaders in the country. The national news media reported the conference as "a one of a kind event in the history of Nigeria."

The response to the training was so overwhelming that a full-time administrator is being hired to oversee the implementation of the training program at the grassroots level. In addition, plans are already underway for multiple conference sites to repeat the training next year. We praise God for what He has and will continue to accomplish through this effort.

There are other ongoing projects as a result of this mission effort. Among these is a Christian film loaner library, which is being set up through Christian Salvage Mission, and the ongoing effort to ship all of the approximately 3,000 Bibles that were donated by Brethren churches.

The Bibles were originally supposed to arrive in Nigeria with other conference materials, but the shipping industry was seized by the Islamic government prior to the conference and the shipment had to be postponed. While in Nigeria, Manaseh was able to get information on how the Bibles could be safely transported into the country, and we are working on arrangements to get them shipped as soon as possible.

A great number of people and organizations were involved in this project, and it would be nearly impossible to name them all. But we would like to thank the many peo-

ple from the more than 35 Brethren churches who donated Bibles so that people in Nigeria could read the word of God. We would like to thank The Brethren Church National Office, Ashland University, and Ashland Theological Seminary for their advisory assistance and their help in receiving and storing the Bibles and in printing conference materials.

We would like to thank those churches outside the Brethren denomination who supported us with donations of Bibles and finances. We would like to thank the multi-denominational task force headed by Nigerian Missions for Christ, who organized the conference and the accommodations in Jos. Special thanks and recognition should go to the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church for its outstanding financial support, for without this assistance the mission could not have been completed.

Most important, thanks to all of

the churches, prayer groups, and individuals who prayed for this mission, many of whom prayed for nearly a year during our preparations.

It is our desire that by this report God would be glorified for this mission, which He called and completed by His power using His people and resources. We hope that this will encourage Christians to unify and to network in mission efforts by sharing resources from many sources to accomplish God's work.

Yours in Christ,
MARK TEAL

Mark Teal, a third-year Master of Divinity student at Ashland Theological Seminary, is a member of the Oakville, Ind., First Brethren Church. He currently pastors the Black River Church of the Brethren in Spencer, Ohio.

Manaseh Wakawa, from Nigeria, is nearing completion of an M.A. degree in biblical studies at ATS. He is head of the Ministry Department of Nigerian Missions for Christ.

An Alternate Approach to Halloween

As Christians, should we allow our children to participate in Halloween holiday activities, with their obvious evil and satanic origins, symbolism, and activities?

Suggested alternatives

1. Carve and display pumpkins with Christian symbols (crosses, fish, etc.), and let *your* light shine in the darkness.
2. Allow your children to dress only in more wholesome costumes, such as clowns, animals, flowers, hoboes, and other comical characters.
3. Along with candy, give the "trick-or-treaters" who visit your home small, inexpensive gifts available at Christian bookstores (bookmarks, pencils, erasers, stickers, jewelry, etc.).
4. Give your children a supply of

tasteful and effective tracts to leave at homes as they "trick or treat" in exchange for the treats they receive. Remind them to always say "Thank you!"

5. Sponsor a "Harvest Time" party at your home or church with food and activities for children and a slumber party/sleep-in for teens to keep them off the streets at night.
6. Explain to children how these activities can be fun and how they can honor God in an otherwise potentially evil holiday.

I hope these suggestions will be of help in relieving Christian concerns and that they will offer *positive* alternatives of ways to enjoy this beautiful season!

DAVID DEISCH

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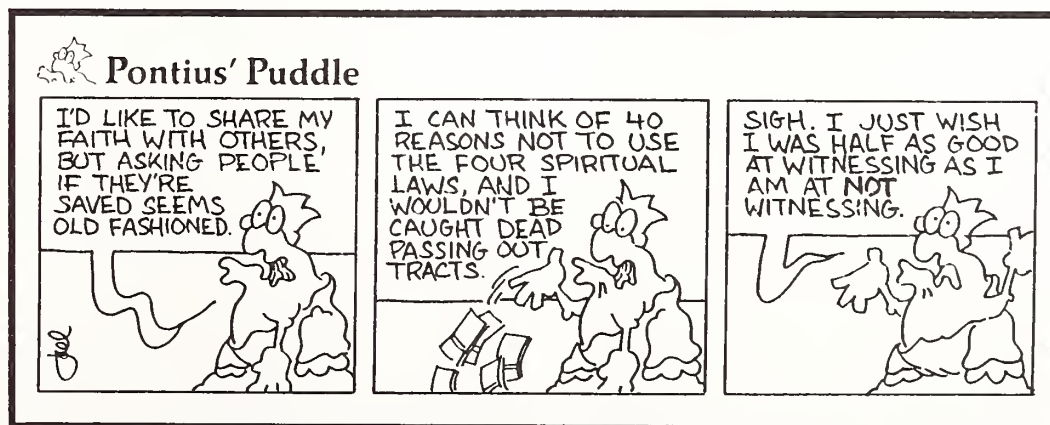
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Answers to the Little Crusader page:

You should have colored the pumpkins that said: "Jesus tells us to think about things above and not about things on earth"; "When we think about things above, we should try to be more like Jesus"; and "If we 'look up to Jesus,' we never need to worry about our future."



Brethren people before Passing On the Promise!

How Brethren Understand God's Word

Part one of two parts

This study was prepared by the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication of The Brethren Church. Its preparation was a process that included writing, sharing with pastors and others for input, revising, receiving further input, then revising again. It was presented as a report to the 1993 General Conference, which made suggestions for minor revisions. These changes were then made and the Conference accepted the report.

"How Brethren Understand the Bible" is also being printed in booklet form, complete with Scripture reference notations. An announcement about availability and price of this booklet will be made soon.

The Importance of the Word

Brethren have always been a people of the Word. Because we affirm Scripture as the rule for our faith and life, we recognize the need to interpret it correctly. Biblical interpretation is especially important for the Brethren, because we have no tradition or official arm of the church to dictate how we must understand the Bible. Since we have never allowed such things to fix the meaning of Scripture, we must try to apply Scripture itself to our lives in each generation.

Biblical interpretation is especially important for the Brethren today. Different views of the nature and interpretation of Scripture are behind the different positions people take on the important issues of our day. We need to understand our biblical heritage in order to discuss these current issues. Such a process of understanding would reacquaint the present generation with the principles that have guided the Brethren in the past. It would also encourage discussion and dialogue among the Brethren as we seek greater consensus on

biblical interpretation and application. We must become aware of our own view of Scripture before we can speak effectively to other believers and the wider culture.

God, the Revealer

The understanding of Scripture begins with the knowledge that God has chosen to communicate with us. Without this revelation, we could not know God at all. God has spoken to us through creation, through human nature, through words, through events in history, and finally through becoming flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. Much of God's revelation in word, in deed, and in Jesus Christ is recorded in Scripture. This is why we can go to Scripture to understand God's character and will. But Scripture contains more than knowledge about God. In Scripture, God speaks to us in love, in order to initiate a relationship with us through redemption in Christ and to bring us into relationship with one another. As we respond to God's loving self-disclosure, we become part of the people of God, a body of believers whose head is Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, the Living Word

Brethren affirm that Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God, the one who reveals God fully and finally. In His life, teaching, death, resurrection, and living presence, Jesus has shown us all we need to know about who God is and who we are. Brethren have believed that Christianity is first and foremost a relationship of loving discipleship to Christ. This relationship with Christ is the first priority in understanding Scripture: it is both the beginning and the end of the process. We must know Christ before we can fully understand Scrip-

ture. We then go to Scripture in order to know Him better and to proclaim Him to others so that they might come to know Him too. Brethren have emphasized that Christ is not just our redeemer but also our teacher and example. The goal of our lives as Christians is to become like Him. The Brethren approach to Scripture thus puts Jesus Christ at the center. It begins with Christ and ends with Christ-likeness.

Scripture, the Outer Word

Scripture is the Word of God in written form. The early Brethren called it the Outer Word, the external written witness which, together with the Holy Spirit, the Inner Word, testifies to the Living Word, Jesus Christ. Because Scripture presents God's revelation to us, it is our only reliable source of knowledge about the mind and will of God. The Bible records God's revelation, witnesses to its truth, and explains it to us. Brethren historically have affirmed that the Bible's authority comes from its witness to Christ as the Living Word. The New Testament, because it witnesses most directly to Christ, is the final rule for our faith and life.

The nature of Scripture, like the nature of Christ, is both human and divine. The Bible itself says that Scripture is inspired or breathed out by God. This means that God guided the human writers to such an extent that what they wrote could be considered God's Word written. The Bible expresses God's eternal truth in the words of particular human beings in history. It shows particular events in history that are relevant to people in all times and places. It is a collection of books written over 1600 years by many different people who had their own concerns,

"The Brethren approach to Scripture puts Jesus Christ at the center. It begins with Christ and ends with Christlikeness."

purposes, and styles. Yet it is unified by God's unchanging plan through history to reach out to human beings, make peace with them, and call them into a new obedient community—the people of God. The Bible's eternal message must be thought through and restated in each generation to speak to the people of that generation.

The Bible tells us both what to believe and how to live. Besides giving us knowledge about God, it also introduces us to the person of Jesus Christ. Through Scripture, the Holy Spirit enables us to come into relationship with Christ and grow into His likeness. Because of its unique character, the Bible has a unique claim on us. Brethren have always held the Bible to be completely true and completely reliable. Jesus Himself said that the Scripture, which to Him meant the Old Testament, cannot be broken.

The Holy Spirit, the Inner Word

The Holy Spirit has a crucial role in interpreting Scripture. The early Brethren called the Holy Spirit the Inner Word who testifies to the Living Word, Jesus Christ, and who helps us to understand the Outer Word, Scripture. Just as the Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is necessary in order to understand and obey the Scriptures. This means that only believers can understand the spiritual significance of the Bible. It also means that all believers have the privilege of reading and understanding Scripture for themselves.

Brethren have believed that the Holy Spirit is as active in the church today as in the days of the apostles. We have been confident that the Spirit would illumine the Scriptures for us and guide us into truth. Both then and now, the Spirit testifies to Christ. Because of our confidence in the Holy Spirit's work, we are open to new light on the Scriptures, relying on

the Spirit to give us new insight into God's eternal truth and help us apply that truth to our lives.

Brethren have affirmed balance and agreement between the Inner Word and the Outer Word. The Scriptures do not come alive to us without the Holy Spirit to interpret them to us and convict us of their truth. Likewise, it is difficult and unwise for us to interpret the Holy Spirit's witness in our hearts without the confirming testimony of the Scriptures. Promptings of the Holy Spirit will not contradict the Outer Word. The Holy Spirit and the inspired Scriptures will always agree.

Being Conformed to the Word

The attitudes with which people approach Scripture strongly influence what they find there. As Brethren, we approach Scripture believing that we are not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. That is, rather than being conformed to the world, we are to be conformed to the Living Word, Jesus Christ, through obedience to the Outer Word, Scripture.

We attempt to read Scripture with both mind and heart. In order to understand the Bible, we study it diligently, using our renewed minds under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We seek to find the plain sense of Scripture, the meaning that the original writers, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, intended to convey. The early Brethren emphasized the simplicity and clarity of Scripture; they pointed out that our greatest problem is not understanding Scripture but obeying it.

In order to understand the Bible, we also read it devotionally, asking the Inner Word, the Holy Spirit, to apply it to our hearts and transform our lives. Brethren have always taken a very practical approach to Scripture, reading it to find God's will and obey it. Bible reading, like all other aspects of

the Christian life, should lead to discipleship.

Brethren have usually approached Scripture with an attitude of humility and love. Rather than exerting mastery over the Word, we have tried to live under the Word. While regarding doctrine as very important, we have refused to develop doctrines that go beyond what Scripture affirms. In our interpretations, we have found that the truth is often a balance between extremes. Both in our study and in our devotions, we go to Scripture to be closer to the Lord we love and serve.

Being Obedient to the Word

Because the Christian life is a relationship of loving discipleship to Christ, we as Brethren read Scripture with the intention of obeying our Lord in all things. A commitment to obedience may be the most important attitude with which we approach Scripture. Brethren have held that Scripture can be fully understood only by someone who is willing to obey it. The basis for this obedience is our love for the Lord who has loved us. It is not enough just to read the Bible or hear the Word preached. We must study the Bible and obey it so the Holy Spirit can use it to change our lives and bless us.

Besides obeying the commands of Scripture, the early Brethren sought to follow the example of Christ and the apostles. They practiced a radical obedience, putting into practice what they found in the Bible, regardless of the consequences. They believed that scriptural demands must not be rationalized away. They looked especially to the Sermon on the Mount for the ethics of the Christian life. Complete obedience to the teaching and example of Christ and the apostles is the basis for the Brethren practice of the ordinances, including some practices (such as footwashing and anointing) which other groups regard as nonessential. [†]

Be Authentic Disciples

By Mary Ellen Drushal

THE TITLE of this article was the theme for the 1990 General Conference. As moderator for that Conference, I prayerfully selected the theme from its supporting scripture, the 15th chapter of John. Then I began to ask the question, "What do authentic disciples do?"

God awakened my heart through the search for responses to that question. He used my study of Scripture, my self-examination, and attendance at a Via de Cristo weekend (now called Brethren Way of Christ) to bring about growth in my Christian walk and witness. As a result of this awakening, my life will never be the same. And God isn't finished with me yet!

I thank God for that privilege of denominational leadership, for without that opportunity I might never have encountered Jesus to the extent I have. I want to share my personal discoveries with you and invite you to join me in a pilgrimage toward authentic discipleship.

What Do Authentic Disciples Do?

Authentic disciples open their eyes to see Jesus. God is accessible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But we must anticipate and sense that presence. The essence of spiritual formation is to acknowledge absolute dependence on God for everything, to know the person of Jesus Christ, to experience His presence, and then to surrender our lives to Him to be reformed according to God's unique plan.

I'm describing an intentional relationship that begins with salvation but which extends to a personal, daily walk with Jesus. This committed relationship develops into intimate friendship and constant companionship.

Dr. Drushal is academic dean and associate professor of Christian education and church administration at Ashland Theological Seminary.

To His disciples, Jesus says, "I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father" (John 15:15*). Authentic disciples, those who deeply desire to be and do all that the Master bids, must open their eyes to friendship with Jesus to see all that He reveals.

Jesus intends for His disciples who become friends to bear much fruit. Fruit-bearing cannot be accomplished apart from the vine (John 15:5). I must open my eyes to all that Jesus has for me if I'm to realize my full fruit-bearing potential in Him.

Authentic disciples are open to others. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). Why did Jesus give that instruction to His disciples? Being open to others and to their life situations frequently causes us to love them as Jesus first loved us. The reverse is also true: experiencing the love of Jesus opens us to being loved by others.

To be open is to be generous; generous in sharing oneself and not closed to others or removed from them. A result of fruit-bearing is openness to loving people and allowing them to love us in return.

This is a most difficult assignment for me. I am a private person. For Jesus to tell me to love others and to be open to them is a difficult command to obey. I would rather do my work in the privacy of my office. But Jesus did His greatest work as He ministered to others in the field. Authentic disciples are open to ministry wherever they find it—sometimes in the interruptions of the day, even when

it doesn't suit their calendars or their temperaments.

Authentic disciples live joyful lives. Life in this century—apart from Christ—is hectic and dull. People scurry from one appointment to the next and from one spectacular event to another without ever pausing to listen to a child, observe a sunset, or touch the life of another in meaningful ways.

"I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:11). Joy springs from drinking repeatedly and deeply of the living water that quenches the thirst of authentic disciples. Joy cannot be sought. It comes as the by-product of being a disciple/friend who depends on Jesus and waits patiently and with anticipation to see what God will do.

Authentic disciples commune with Jesus. "You did not choose me but I chose you" (John 15:16). Authentic disciples are children of the King. He selects each of us, molds our heart through life experiences. And He has a plan for each of us that we discover through communing with Him. The problem is, most of us spend time trying to make certain we are doing what He wants us to do while failing to look at who He wants us to be.

To commune means to talk together intimately. Intimate conversation takes place when we listen and talk to someone whom we love very much. Talking to God, or praying, is usually a one-sided activity. It certainly is not intimate communion until we stop and listen. What is He saying? What is the inflection in His voice? What did He mean by that? Can I describe His countenance as He spoke to me through His word?

The more I listen in prayer, the more God shapes me into the authentic disciple He desires me to be. I do, however, have a free will that

*Quotations from the Bible are from the New Revised Standard Version.

can alter all this. He created me that way, and I don't have to respond to His call or His leading. But what a foolish way to live one's life!

He will not overwhelm me or force me to do anything He desires. I get to choose. But why would I choose just life when I could have abundant life? Why would I choose just happiness when I could experience deep joy? Why would I choose just servanthood when I could also be a close friend of Jesus?

You and I have a choice to make about what kind of life to live. Will we choose a joyful life that seeks

and expects growth and maturity in our relationship with Jesus? Will we live our lives running from activity to activity, or will we operate from a quiet center in contemplation of God? Will our lives exclude love and openness to others, or will we hide behind busy schedules to avoid personal vulnerability in relationships? Will our interaction with Jesus take place in quiet solitude, or will we try to commune with Him while on the run engaged in frenzied activity?

The importance of communion with God is underscored by a

plaque given to me by Rev. James R. Black. It sits on my desk at the seminary as a constant reminder. It says, "If you educate, you get what education can do; if you organize, you get what organization can do; but when you pray, you get what God can do!"

Brothers and sisters, in 1990 I urged our denomination to "be authentic disciples" who commune with God in prayer to see what God can accomplish through us. Today I call each of us to a pilgrimage with Jesus so that we might live a joyful and abundant life in Christ. [†]

Follow the Leader

A message by Brethren Youth in Christ spokesperson Troy Cummins presented at the opening service of the 1993 General Conference.

THE THEME for our youth Convention is "Follow the Leader," and our Scripture verse is taken from 1 John 2:5-6:

But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

I spent this past summer at a church camp. Either because of being with children, helping to lead recreation, or maybe just because I'm a child myself sometimes, the first thing I thought of in connection with this theme was the game, Follow the Leader.

When leading recreation, it's very important that everyone understands the rules. So what I'm going to do is take a few minutes to explain the rules of Follow the Leader. It's not that simple.

First, you have to agree to play the game. Now that's simple enough. More than likely, each one of us has agreed, in some way, to

do that. What this means is that we have to accept Jesus Christ. When you do that, you agree to play the game because then you know that you have a Leader.

Second, you need to remember that there can only be one leader. There were several times at camp when we would explain a game and the kids would take off in all different directions. But when playing Follow the Leader, you have to follow one person. If there are three or four different leaders, you are going to have different games going on at the same time.

In the Christian life, having more than one leader translates into putting other things higher than God. As Christians, we need to remember who our Leader is.

Third, and this is something that children have problems with, you need to watch the leader very carefully. As Christians, this means Bible study and prayer. The only way that we are able to follow Christ is if we are into His word and if we know how He walked. We need to know the things that He did and the things that He taught us to do. Only then can we follow our Leader's example.

Fourth, we have to have confidence in the one who is leading us. We have to remember that in our relationship with Christ, in the "game" we are playing, Christ is not going to lead us anywhere we

are not able to follow. We need to remember this in order to have confidence, in order to have faith, in our Leader.

And finally, we need to remember to be an example for the person who is standing behind us. There were times at camp when we would have a hundred children in a line following one person. I know from experience that when standing at the end of the line, it is very difficult to see the person at the front, to see what the leader is actually doing. Because of that I depended on the people who were directly in front of me.

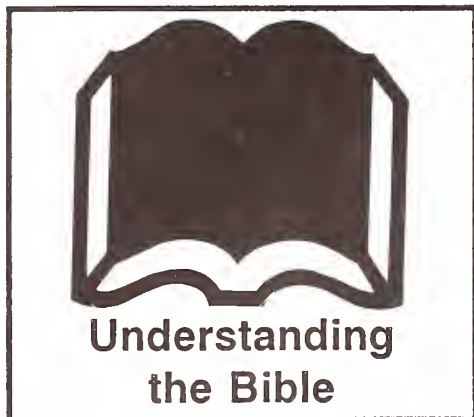
Many of you as pastors or youth leaders or people who are engaged in or support other ministries, you are following Christ your Leader. But you are also serving as leaders to the people who are behind you. You are the example that they will follow. If you're following Christ's example and they're following your example, then they are following Christ as well.

That's how you play the game. You have to remember to follow the rules or the game doesn't work. And fortunately, in this game there aren't any winners or losers. There are only people who try and people who succeed.

This is what the youth will be working on this week. And we'd like to bring the same challenge to you, the adults. [†]



Troy, a member of the Bryan, Ohio, First Brethren Church, is a junior at Ashland University. This past summer he served as a Crusader Intern at the Indiana District Camp.



The Authority of Scripture

By Brenda B. Colijn

Second in a series of articles in a new column dealing with Bible interpretation.

BRETHREN have always affirmed the authority of the Bible as the final rule for our faith and life. This position is more important today than ever, because it is under attack, not only from our culture but also from some segments of the church. Brethren continue to believe that Scripture is the only objective standard for deciding issues of belief and behavior.

But why is Scripture authoritative? From where does its authority come? This question has been answered in different ways.

Views on biblical authority

One view, held by Roman Catholics and others, says that authority comes from the **church**. The church's decisions about the nature and understanding of Scripture have formed a **tradition** that has an authority equal to that of Scripture itself.

Another view, advanced by classical liberalism, says that human **reason** gives authority to Scripture. The parts of Scripture that agree with our reason are authoritative; the parts that seem unreasonable are not.

Many modern readers of the Bible, both theologians and lay people, base biblical authority on their own **experience**. What supports my own experience or strikes home to me as I read the Bible is authoritative for me; the rest is not.

A fourth view places authority in the **biblical words** themselves. We know that the Bible is true and

trustworthy because its words have been given by God. Since God cannot err, the Bible must also be inerrant (containing no errors) or infallible (incapable of error). This has been the most popular view among fundamentalists and evangelicals during the last century.

The historic Brethren view

The historic Brethren view is slightly different. The early Brethren certainly believed the Bible to be the word of God. Alexander Mack declared: "[A] faithful child of God looks only to his heavenly Father, and believes and follows Him in His revealed Word, because he is certain of and believes that God and His spoken Word are completely one."^{*} The early Brethren did not believe that the Bible contained errors; such an idea would never have occurred to them.

But when the first Brethren wanted to talk about biblical authority, especially that of the New Testament, they talked about **Jesus Christ**. Alexander Mack based the authority of the New Testament firmly on the authority of Christ,

the Son of God, through whom the Father has spoken to us "in these last days" (Hebrews 1:1, 2)—by whom the Father "made the whole world"; who is that living "Word become flesh" (John 1[:14]); to whom the Father has given "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18); which law is "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion . . . not only in this age but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:21). It is the

^{*}*Rights and Ordinances*, in *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, William R. Eberly, ed. (Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1991), p. 82.

Son of God who "has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him" (1 Peter 3:22). Now consider how much better the teaching of the Son of God must be kept, how much more strictly and unfalteringly, by all those who believe in His teachings, commandments, good counsel, and laws.**

Jesus is the living Word, God's supreme revelation of Himself. Scripture, the written word, is authoritative because it testifies to Him (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39-40). The words of the Bible do not automatically create belief in those who read them. The Holy Spirit, who testifies to Christ, convicts people of the authority of Scripture (John 15:26; 16:8-15; 1 Cor. 2:14).

Saying that the Brethren give primary authority to Jesus rather than to the words of the Bible may seem to be a picky point. Certainly, Jesus and the Bible will never contradict one another. Jesus is the Lord of Scripture, and Scripture witnesses to Him. So why is this distinction important?

Reasons for the distinction

FIRST, the Brethren view holds that biblical authority is the authority of a **person**—the Lord Jesus Christ. We certainly must be able to defend our beliefs about Scripture to those who challenge them (see 1 Peter 3:15-16). But logical arguments about the reliability of the Bible can go only so far. The truth of the Bible—and the truth of Christianity—ultimately rests upon the person of Jesus Christ. He is the one we must proclaim, and He is the one to whom

**Eberly, p. 102.

Mrs. Colijn is a member of the Smoky Row Brethren Church in Worthington, Ohio. She chairs The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication.

all must respond (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Cor. 5:10; Phil. 2:9-11). We don't worship the Bible; we worship the Lord of the Bible.

SECOND, biblical authority is the authority of a **relationship**. It is grounded in the relationship between the God who speaks and the people who hear (Deut. 6:1; Is. 51:7; Mark 4:23-25; John 6:68-69). It is expressed in the claim of the Lord Jesus Christ on His own (John 10:14-16, 27), as well as in the relationships of love and mutual accountability that grow out of Christ's love for believers (1 John 4:7-12, 19-21).

THIRD, this authority demands a **response**. It isn't enough to know and respect the words of Scripture. The Jehovah's Witnesses know the Bible better than the average orthodox Christian. Furthermore, some radical biblical scholars have a brilliant understanding of the original meaning of the Bible. But they deny that this meaning has any claim on us today.

It isn't enough even to believe the right things about Scripture. The Pharisees had a high view of Scripture, but they missed its main purpose—to point to Jesus Christ, so that they might come to Him and have life (John 5:39-40). The authority of Christ in Scripture demands that we respond in faith and obedience to Christ's claims in Scripture. It calls us to a life of loving discipleship to our Savior and Lord.

FOURTH, the Brethren view of biblical authority is lived out in **community**. We are related to one another and to Christ as a single organism, body and head (1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23). We are accountable to one another for our understanding of Scripture and our application of it. This commitment forms the basis of our corporate worship, nurture, discipline, witness, and service (Matt. 18:15-20; John 13:34-35; Gal. 6:1-2; Eph. 4:11-16).

FIFTH, this is a **balanced** view of biblical authority that takes ac-

Correspondence Welcomed

In this and future articles in this column, members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication will discuss topics related to interpreting the Bible. The committee invites readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of the EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

count of the Bible's dual nature: like Christ, the Bible is both human and divine. It reflects the human situations, concerns, and styles of its human writers. It is also divinely inspired, although it doesn't tell us precisely how that inspiration took place (John 7:16-17; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; 3:15-16). We need not be afraid to acknowledge the human dimension of Scripture, even as we affirm its inspiration.

FINALLY, the authority of Christ makes biblical authority **secure**. We don't have to fear that biblical critics will discover something that will undermine our faith. Like Christ, Scripture is utterly true and trustworthy. It will withstand any question we put to it and will make us "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," equipping us to fulfill all that God calls us to (2 Tim. 3:15-17, *NIV*).

AS EVANGELICALS, we have said a great deal about the authority of the Bible. In fact, we have sometimes been more willing to fight among ourselves over the exact definition of inerrancy than we have been to build up one another in love and witness to unbelievers.

We say that Scripture is our final standard, but is it really? We reject Catholic tradition, but we have our own traditions, personal and corporate. The official explanations may have come from history or from the church we were raised in or from our favorite TV preacher, but we cling to them and read the Bible through their lenses. We reject liberalism, but

we are still sometimes guilty of picking and choosing from the Bible what seems reasonable to us and leaving the rest. We reject the idea that experience overrules the Bible, but we sometimes neglect the hard work of Bible study and talk only about "what it means to me."

The true test is obedience

As the early Brethren would remind us, the true test of our words is obedience. Do we read the Bible as part of our commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ? Are we accountable to Him and to one another for what we find there? Do we go to the Bible to feel secure in what we already know, or do we let it make us uncomfortable? Are we willing to let the Bible change our ideas—and change us? Do we read Scripture in light of its redemptive purpose to edify believers and witness to unbelievers? In short, do we read Scripture with the humility and love appropriate to Christ's disciples?

We *must* affirm the authority of Scripture. There is no salvation outside of Christ (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), and there is no place but Scripture that can teach us of that salvation (John 6:68-69; 2 Tim. 3:15). But we must also live out our conviction in our lives.

An anonymous eighteenth-century Brethren pamphlet urged believers to read and obey the Bible so diligently that "the entire New Testament is written into the heart of the reader by the finger of God until the entire life of the reader becomes a living letter of God in which one can read all the commandments of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:3)."

The strongest argument for biblical authority is our obedience to the Lord of the Bible. We can talk all we want to about the authority of Scripture, but if we don't obey what we find in Scripture, our words are meaningless. [†]

*"A Humble Gleam of the Despised Little Light of the Truth which is in Christ," in *The Brethren in Colonial America*, Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed. (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Press, 1967), p. 431.

Accent on Our Shared Commitment

By G. William Benz

A FEW WEEKS AGO at Ashland University's fall convocation, I shared some thoughts with the university community concerning the topic which is the title of this article: "Accent on Our Shared Commitment." A good portion of this presentation focused on the importance of our educational mission and the heritage of the University, not only with respect to our past and our present, but even more important, as a vital basis upon which to build our future.

The mission of a college or university ought to be a clear expression of the institution's nature and of its purposes and goals. The mission should express the distinctive features of the college's history, programs, and values. Furthermore, it ought to be a statement not just printed in catalogs and other publications, but also reflected clearly in the programs of the college and in the people who comprise the community.

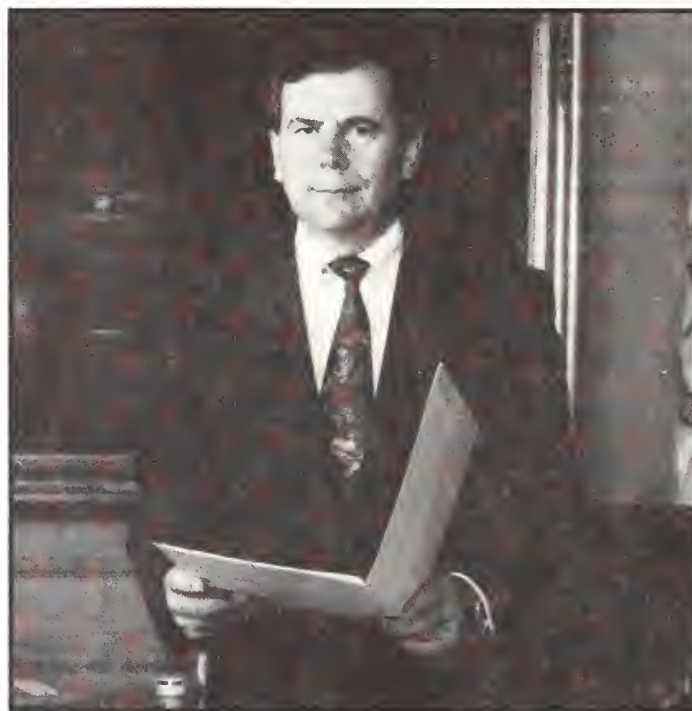
At the present time, the mission of Ashland University is being re-visited as part of a strategic planning process. During the last academic year, a committee was appointed by interim president Dr. Walter Waetjen to begin the groundwork for planning.

Quite properly, as its starting point, the committee began to re-evaluate the present mission statement of the University in order to ascertain whether or not the present wording is an accurate reflection of who and what we are as an institution of higher learning. The committee solicited opinions and views from all of the constituencies on campus through such means as a detailed questionnaire, interviews, and considerable discussion. At present, the wording of that mission statement is still being considered by the faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees.

In my remarks at the convocation, I emphasized that we need to have a common sense of what we do, why we do it, and whom we need to reach. For long-range planning to be successful, the mission must be clearly articulated and understood by all of our constituencies as we prepare for the future.

Shared aspects of our mission

Part of our mission is congruent with the educational philosophy adhered to by most quality liberal arts colleges and universities. Similar to those institutions, our mission should demonstrate that we are a community of people dedicated to:



*Dr. G. William Benz,
President of Ashland University**

1. The development of the life of the mind.
This includes establishing programs that foster intellectual growth, expansion of knowledge, development of critical thinking skills, fostering of a spirit of free inquiry with respect for the opinions of others, and ensuring that students are exposed to both breadth and depth in terms of academic course offerings.
2. The development of competencies such as writing, reading, quantitative and critical thinking skills.
3. The development of an understanding of the importance of *values* and the need to make value and ethical choices.
4. The development of the whole person.
By this is meant not only the development of the intellectual side of the student, but also considerable attention to ways in which stu-

*Dr. Benz became president of Ashland University in May of this year. He came to AU from Ohio Wesleyan University, where he served from 1986 to 1992 as provost and from September 1992 until early 1993 as special assistant to the president. Additional background information about Dr. Benz was included in the January 1993 EVANGELIST (p. 18).

"I have been personally impressed with the degree to which the flavor of Ashland University and the way we operate is so heavily influenced by this Brethren heritage."

dents need to grow socially, spiritually, physically, and culturally.

Distinctive aspects of our mission

While the mission of Ashland University will clearly reflect the importance we give to these characteristics that we share with other fine educational institutions, there also are some distinctive aspects of our mission that need to be given at least equal emphasis.

1. At Ashland University we are very much committed to the importance of the liberal arts as a foundation for understanding the human experience, for developing critical and creative thinking, and for establishing a commitment to a life of learning.
2. Also vital to our educational mission is providing initial and advance preparation for careers in selected professional and applied areas such as the Seminary, education, and business.
3. A distinctive feature of our mission is an emphasis on meeting the educational needs of a variety of students with respect to types of programs, sites, and teaching hours.
4. A very notable aspect of our mission over the years has been our explicit commitment to and emphasis on the importance of Judeo-Christian values and on imparting those values to our students. We are not a "Christian college" in that we require a particular expression of faith or adherence to a particular lifestyle, but we are very up front in stating that we believe strongly in the Judeo-Christian tradition and in the values that are represented by that tradition.
5. Relatedly, we are also proud of our historical relationship with The Brethren Church. Ashland University was founded by The Brethren Church in 1878, and we continue to cultivate a close relationship with the Brethren denomination. I have been personally impressed with the degree to which the flavor of Ashland University and the way we operate is so heavily influenced by this Brethren heritage. As part of the work in developing a new mission statement, members of the Planning to Plan Committee came across a statement from an Ashland College catalog of 1884 that speaks eloquently to the kind of Brethren tradition that we hope is reflected at Ashland University in 1993. The catalog stated that at Ashland the courses "would develop the students intellectually, but not at the expense of the heart; the

rich and poor would meet on the grounds of equality; that worth, not dress, would be valued and respected; that economy, not extravagance would be fostered; and that a desire for usefulness, not show, would be promoted."

6. A distinctive feature of the Ashland experience is reflected in a phrase that began during the presidency of Dr. Glenn L. Clayton: "Accent on the Individual." While many smaller colleges try to give emphasis to the importance of each student, it is my view that Ashland has been able to translate this concept into reality to an extent that far exceeds what is found on most small college campuses throughout the country. Alumni mention this as one of the distinguishing characteristics of the education they received while they were on this campus.
7. A theme that also needs to be reflected in our mission statement is a pronounced emphasis on the importance of community service. What students learn in the classroom and the laboratory is not meant to stay there, but to be applied in a life of commitment and service to help fellow human beings.

One of my responsibilities as president is to keep high and visible the mission, purposes, and goals of the University. Another responsibility equally important is to ensure that our *vision* of who and what we are matches the *reality* of who and what we are. A. Bartlett Giamatti, a former president of Yale, in his excellent book entitled *A Free and Ordered Space*, stated: "American colleges and universities serve neither themselves nor the country if they are unsure of their own principles and purposes or if they cannot convey them to the people at large."

The challenge for the future

Our challenge is to develop and articulate together our vision of the future of Ashland University—a vision that reflects and builds upon our rich heritage and traditions, reflects and builds upon the exciting present, and is a vision that will serve well the intellectual, spiritual, and social needs of all members of our community well into the future.

If we are successful at what we hope to do here, we will be an institution that will not be a sanctuary from the society, but serve as tributaries to it. We will produce men and women whose lives will make a great difference because of their knowledge, their commitment to service, and their adherence to values that give shape to beliefs and to actions. [†]

Seeing Christ's Presence on the Ashland University Campus

HOW EXCITING it was for me to hear at this year's General Conference of the many, many good things that are happening in churches across our denomination! Of particular encouragement to me was the involvement of numerous churches in Passing On the Promise, as well as the great enthusiasm of our Brethren Youth in Christ (BYIC). The Concert of Prayer, for many, was one of the highlights of Conference. Certainly, the Holy Spirit is walking among Brethren congregations.

Last year in the Ashland University report, I shared historical illustrations of what the God

of history has done in a phenomenal way, as He has sparked revivals on university campuses across the nation and around the world. This year I would like to encourage your prayers and continued support by sharing with you the fruit of your intercession on our behalf.

How has Christ been seen on the Ashland University campus? This was the question I posed to various students and staff. I believe their responses will encourage you concerning the work that God is doing at your University.

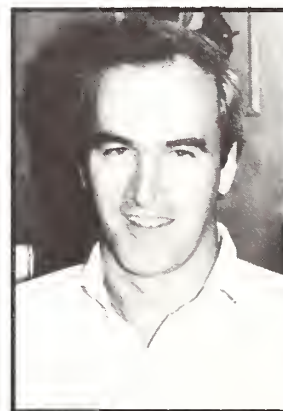
— Dr. Mike Gleason
Director of Religious Life

I SEE MORE of the Ashland University students being drawn to the Christian activities this year than in the previous three years. They come searching for the constant that all of us seek in our lives. We don't always have tightly packaged answers, but we have the same heart of the traveler to help them in their pursuit of truth.

The University Church has grown remarkably in only two years, with 245 in attendance last Sunday (September 12). This can only be explained by the loving work of the Lord as He continues to send the sheep to a caring, outreaching flock. Their participation in all aspects of the church, from reading Scripture to preaching to singing to organizing, allows them to serve as members of the body of Christ and lets Christ speak through them by their talents and gifts.

Apart from Christ, we would be just another club trying to get new members. With Christ we can reach into the heart of the Ashland campus and share the glory of the gospel. Only through the grace of God can we even exist at all. The positive results, therefore, are His doing and to His honor.

— Dr. Ken Cutrer



Dr. Cutrer is pastor of the University Church.

Karen, a junior at the University, is a member of the Tucson, Arizona, First Brethren Church.



UPON my arrival on campus two years ago, I had no idea how my life would change. The Lord called me to go where I never thought He would. Leaving my family and friends in Tucson, Arizona, and driving to Ohio was the first miracle the Lord worked in my life. I have seen things I never thought I would. I have seen the mighty hand of God move hearts in the only way He can, in a loving yet powerfully effective way.

— Karen Robins



Troy, a member of the Bryan, Ohio, First Brethren Church, is a junior at Ashland University.

LIFE on a college campus is described with words like abundant opportunities and excitement. I praise God that these same descriptive words can be used when talking about the manner in which God is working here at Ashland University. The only explanation that is fitting to the spiritual atmosphere is that God's Spirit is present in the lives of His people. A revival is at hand, and I feel as though I have a front row seat to see the Holy Spirit go to work.

For me, this awakening is seen in the willingness of individuals to serve their Lord. Even more dumbfoundingly wonderful, I'm seeing an openness in individuals who are still searching. God is continually working in the lives of those around me as well as in my own life. Coordinating the Gospel Team program has opened up several opportunities for me to see the results of God's work, as well as allowing me to be a participant in God's plans instead of a mere spectator.

— Troy Cummins

AS A SENIOR I've seen the campus go through a lot of changes, and our Christian fellowships show a lot of growth. In the four years I've been here, HOPE fellowship has grown into the largest campus organization. The campus has become more than just friendly as we reach out to the unsaved.

Personally, I've grown a lot from participating in and now leading a small-group Bible study. Our group has been together for three years. We are a diverse group; I'm really not sure how we all got together. But it's really great to come together with these people to spend time in prayer and study of God's word. Since the time we spend at Share Group is about the only time we see each other, each meeting is like a small reunion. This group has helped to develop friendships that will last long after our years at Ashland University are finished.

— Annalee Hoover



Annalee, from N. Georgetown, Ohio, is a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church and a senior at the University.



Chad, a member of the Fremont, Ohio, Brethren Church, is a sophomore at Ashland University.

MY FRESHMAN YEAR at Ashland University was not quite like I thought it would be. I was expecting it to be like high school—hanging out with friends all the time, messing around whenever I wanted, etc. Boy, was I wrong! In the beginning, I found myself alone in my room, wishing that someone would call. Then I heard about HOPE Fellowship and Fellowship of Christian Athletes and decided to attend. I could just feel the presence of the Lord there. I was finally accepted and liked. I continued to get involved with the Religious Life program and my spiritual life grew tremendously. I then got involved with the Missions Group and went with them to Kentucky and Mexico to witness for the Lord. Ministry opportunities at Ashland University are not only on campus, as I thought they would be, but they are reaching out to the world!

— Chad Geaslen

BRETHREN, thank you so very much for your prayers, support, and assistance in developing the next generation of leaders. I look

forward to your partnership in this mission field throughout the coming year.

Working together, Dr. Mike Gleason

Marketplace 29 A.D. is V.B.S. Theme At St. James, Md., Brethren Church

St. James, Md. — Marketplace 29 A.D. was the theme of an unusual vacation Bible school held this past summer at the St. James Brethren Church.

The church property was turned into a New Testament-times marketplace

for the event. In the marketplace were several shops—the Weaver's Shop, Merchant's Shop, Potter's Shop, Baker's Shop, Dyer's Shop, and the Scribe's Shop—to which the children made visits. There they would make or do something

(make unleavened bread, copy a portion of scripture, etc.) that related to Bible times and also hear a Bible story that tied in with the activities of that shop.

A drama team from the church acted out a Bible story each evening, complete with costumes and props. A "well" was "dug" on the site, which was used for the story of the Woman at the Well and also as a place where the children could learn about the water of life. There was also a pen of Bible animals that the children could visit when they had finished their classes.

As the children arrived each evening, they registered at the Tax Collector's table, where they paid their "taxes" (gave their offering). Refreshments served nightly were foods in keeping with Bible times (figs, grapes, apricots, nuts, with water to drink).

Kristy Bowers (Christian education director at St. James) and Cheryl Smith served as co-chairs of the V.B.S. The Summer Crusader team "His Workmanship" also helped with the V.B.S. An adult class, "Jesus, Paul and the End of the World," was taught by Ashland Theological Seminary professor Dr. Ben Witherington.

Marketplace 29 A.D. proved to be a most interesting and worthwhile V.B.S., so much so that the concept will be used again next year. Average attendance for the week was 195.

— reported by Sandra L. Culler, administrative secretary



Sandie Jamison leads a class of children at the Potter's Shop.

Brethren Church Chuck Wagon Enters New Lebanon Parade

New Lebanon, Ohio — Each year the village of New Lebanon commemorates having once been a stagecoach stop by holding a Stagecoach Days Festival, complete with carnival and parade. Included in the June 12 parade this year was a chuck wagon sponsored by The Brethren Church of New Lebanon to promote the Family Feeding Fellowship.

The Family Feeding Fellowship is the result of an idea that spent a few years growing in the mind of Alice Blosser. When the church did a survey of members' gifts several years ago, Mrs. Blosser expressed an interest in helping to meet the food needs of people in the New Lebanon community.

Drawing on like-minded individuals in the church for planning and preparation, Mrs. Blosser offered the first meal on July 25, 1992. About 15 people took advantage of the opportunity for a good,

hot meal and friendly fellowship. Every last Saturday of the month since then has seen a flurry of activity in the church kitchen and fellowship hall, as meals are prepared for delivery and tables are set for guests to come in.

As the name suggests, the primary focus of the meal is on families. But anyone who is elderly, lonely, or in need of a little help with food is welcome. The fellowship comes through eating in company with the other people who come for the meals. The free meals are offered at the end of the month because this is often the time when people have the most difficulty making ends meet.

The chuck wagon in the parade certainly helped get the word out about this ministry. Fifty people came for the meal on June 26, about a dozen more than the average over the past year. But that's not the only benefit. Everyone who helped construct the float and who rode in the parade felt the special bond that comes from working together in God's ministry.

— reported by Ray Hesketh, associate pastor



New Lebanon Brethren and the Family Feeding Fellowship chuck wagon.

Flurry of Activity Engulfs Corinth Church As Pastor Bill Brady Concludes His Ministry

Twelve Mile, Ind. — A flurry of activity engulfed the Corinth Brethren Church during the summer months as Rev. Bill Brady brought to a conclusion his five-year term as pastor of the congregation.

On Sunday evening, July 18, Lynne Brady blessed the congregation and visiting members of the community with a piano concert featuring classical and sacred music. Many of the numbers were arrangements she had made during her years in Twelve Mile. Included in the performance were selections by Chopin, Bach, and Beethoven, blended with popular hymn tunes of the church.

Sunday, July 25, was Super Summer Sunday at the church. Approximately 90 people attended the evening celebration presented by the Corinth Brethren Sunday school children. The children gave the program as a "consequence" of losing the Kids vs. Adults attendance contest on Friend Day V held earlier.

The program included skits, poems written by the children about Pastor Brady, and musical numbers taken from the seven musicals presented by the Junior Youth over the past five years.

On August 1st, 132 members and friends of the congregation celebrated the ordination of Mike and Cathy Morrow and George and Betty Staller as deacon couples in the church. Special music for the afternoon program featured Cyrena Staller, Jill Zartman, Julie Fred, and Nila Staller. Pastor Brady brought the message. Among the visitors were former pastors Rev. Clarence Kindley and Rev. Mark Britton, Indiana District moderator Rev. Jim Thomas, and Indiana District Elder Rev. Gene Eckerley.

Then on Sunday, August 8, the Corinth congregation bid farewell to Pastor Bill and Lynne Brady and sons Bill and Bryan in a special night of



New deacon couples Betty and George Staller (l.) and Mike and Cathy Morrow.

music. The program included music by Marvin Dillman and by "The Reason We Sing" (a contemporary gospel group featuring Dale and Heather Green, Doug and Melanie Nolen, and Richard Green), as well as a humorous skit written and presented by Gale Strong assisted by Stephanie Scott.

The senior youth presented a basketball standard to Bryan; the Woman's



Rev. and Mrs. Bill Brady

Missionary Society presented a home-crafted quilt to Lynne; and the congregation presented a plaque commemorating 20 years of pastoral ministry to Pastor Brady.

Following many tears, hugs, and promises to visit, the congregation extended its best wishes and prayers to the Brady family as they prepared to depart for Tucson, Arizona, where Rev. Brady assumed the pastorate of the Tucson First Brethren Church on August 15.

— reported by Rev. Bill Brady

Ron Miller is Pastor's Assistant At Linwood Brethren Church

Linwood, Md. — Ron Miller became assistant to the pastor at the Linwood Brethren Church earlier this year.

This was another step in a process that began about two years earlier when Ron, his wife, Sandy, and their two sons, Ronnie (13) and Bobby (6), began attending the Linwood Church.

Shortly after their first visit to the church, Rev. Bob Keplinger, pastor of the congregation, made a pastoral call. During that visit Ron asked about the qualifications for Brethren pastoral ministry.

"I gave him a good answer and we went on talking about Linwood, where they felt very much at home after only several visits," Pastor Keplinger recalls. "When I got home I began to realize that Ron was thinking deeper than I was, and [so I] went back for another visit.

Ron confirmed that for several years he had sensed the Lord calling him into ministry, but he had not had the opportunity and did not know what to do."

The Millers soon became baptized members of the Linwood Church and began to assume roles of leadership. Ron now serves as president of the Linwood Men of Mission and is also assistant Sunday school superintendent. Sandy is the leader of the nursery department and church clerk.

Last February Ron was approached about becoming assistant to the pastor, and he agreed to do so. According to Pastor Keplinger, this has worked out very well, and Ron is looking forward to even more involvement in the Linwood Church and in the Brethren denomination. Ron and Sandy were two of the six people from the Linwood congregation who attended the Evangelism Leaders Academy this summer. And during the summer Ron spoke at various churches in the community.



Ron and Sandy Miller.

"It has been a real blessing for our congregation to see this young couple grow and be used of the Lord," Rev. Keplinger commented.

Central District Conference Held July 9-10 At the Cerro Gordo, Ill., Brethren Church

Cerro Gordo, Ill. — The Central District Conference was held July 9-10 at the Cerro Gordo Brethren Church.

Moderator-elect Ronald L. Waters opened the conference with an inspirational address in which he made several recommendations to the district. In later action, the 21 delegates (17 lay, 4 ministerial) approved his recommendation to set aside November 7, 1993, as a day of prayer in the district; approved his recommendation that the district provide an annual \$3,000 scholarship for each student from the Central District who attends Ashland Theological Seminary (with a scholarship to be awarded to a Brethren student from another district if no one from the Central District is attending the seminary); passed on to the District Executive Committee a recommendation that a study be made of the possibility of holding conference every other year, with a time for inspiration and fellowship being scheduled for the non-conference

years; and approved a recommendation that each pastor in the district preach at least one sermon during the year "exhorting the Brethren to witness to the world by developing a Christ-like lifestyle."

Moderator Phil Michael, a layman in the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, conducted the business sessions. In addition to acting on the above recommendations, delegates received reports, elected officers, and took care of other items of business. A proposed 1994 district budget of \$5,225 was approved, which included an apportionment increase from \$7.50 to \$8.00 per member. The District Mission Board budget was also accepted, which designated that \$5,000 be used to provide funds so that the wives of Home Mission pastors could attend the training conferences that their husbands attend, so that they also could receive needed encouragement and fellowship.

Officers for 1993-94 are moderator

Rev. Ron Waters; moderator-elect Rev. Ken Sullivan; secretary Doris Geisz; assistant secretary Cathy Poffenberger; treasurer Sue Michael; and assistant treasurer Melva Staples.

According to the district statistical report, the four churches of the Central District ended the year with 662 members, with worship attendance for the year averaging 454. During the year 23 members were added and 63 lost—15 of these by the closing in July 1992 of the Milmine, Ill., Brethren Church—for a net lost of 40 members. The district trustees reported that the Milmine Church property was sold for \$8,000.

In addition to the moderator-elect's address, inspirational messages were presented by Rev. Robert Schubert, associate pastor of the Lanark First Brethren Church; and by Rev. Russ Gordon, Director of Brethren Home Missions. Pastor David Condrey of the host church also led hymn sings at the beginning and the conclusion of the conference.

Next year's conference is scheduled for July 8-9 at the Milledgeville, Ill., Brethren Church.

Deacon Couples Ordained At Goshen First Brethren

Goshen, Ind. — Five new deacon couples were ordained during the June 6 morning worship service at the Goshen First Brethren Church.

The couples were Ken and Paula Metzler, Bruce and Kelly Troeger, Bob and Penny Bollinger, Wayne and Serita

Miner, and Greg and Deb Pollock.

Rev. David Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, gave the message for the service. Also taking part in the service were Goshen Senior Pastor Donald Rowser; Assistant Pastor David Kline; and Mrs. Charlene Rowser, who sang "How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings."

— reported by Joan Cannon, chair,
Public Relations Committee



Goshen's new deacon couples and those who conducted the service of ordination: (l. to r.) Pastor Donald Rowser, Ken and Paula Metzler, Bruce and Kelly Troeger, Greg Pollock, Bob and Penny Bollinger, Assistant Pastor David Kline, Deb Pollock, Wayne and Serita Miner, and Rev. Dave Cooksey.



Masontown, Pa. — Rev. Curt Nies (r.) was installed Sunday, June 13, as pastor of the Masontown Brethren Church. Rev. Dave Cooksey (l.), Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, led the installation service. Marsha Nies (c.), Pastor Nies's wife, sang the song "Thank You" during the service. Following the installation, the Nies family and Rev. Cooksey were dinner guests at the home of deaconess Dorothy Hess. Before coming to Masontown, Rev. Nies served for approximately 5½ years as pastor of the Falls City, Nebr., First Brethren Church.

Sarasota, Fla., Proclaims Aug. 8th J.D. Hamel Day In Honor of Pastor "Bud's" Seventieth Birthday

Sarasota, Fla. — Sunday, the 8th of August, was proclaimed Dr. J.D. Hamel Day in the city of Sarasota in honor of the 70th birthday of this Brethren pastor and evangelist affectionately known to most people as "Bud."

Dr. Hamel received the key to the city during an all-city surprise birthday party held at the First Brethren Church of Sarasota, where he had served as pastor for 28 years until his retirement in 1988. But perhaps the best surprise for Dr. Hamel on this occasion was the opportunity to celebrate his 70th birthday with his family, including his twin brother Dr. Dana B. Hamel and his wife, Shirley. Dr. Dana Hamel is chancellor emeritus of the Virginia Community College system and executive director of the Virginia Center for Public/Private Initiatives.

Dr. J.D. Hamel's wife, Jean, and their three children—Jo Anne, John, and Janet—were present, as well as all ten of their grandchildren. Dana's son, Randy, also made a surprise visit the next day. The grandchildren, which also include a set of twins, gave the older twins matching T-shirts that read, "It took me 70 years to look this good."



Dr. J.D. Hamel (l.) shows surprise and delight at the unexpected arrival from Virginia of his twin brother, Dana.

The party was well-attended and was also broadcast live over radio station WKZM. Among the guests speaking and/or presenting awards at the gathering were Vice-Mayor Nora Patterson; John Lewis, Director of Public Safety (police and fire departments); Captain

Jerry Eggleston representing Sheriff Geoffe Monge; City Manager Mr. Sollenberger; former county commissioner Jerry Hente; and Sarasota First Brethren Pastor Rev. Dan Gray. Dr. J.D. Hamel also received numerous cards and letters, including a handwritten birthday greeting from Dr. Billy Graham.

The event was especially joyful for Dr. Hamel because of his recent miraculous healing from cancer, for which he gives God the glory. Following surgery in November 1992, he was told that the aggressive cancer had spread and was incurable. But even before possible treatment could be discussed, the cancer disappeared.

"This birthday could have been very different for us," said his daughter Janet, visiting from Michigan. "We are rejoicing in the new life Dad has been given, and [we] don't want to wait until the Lord someday does take him home to show how much he is loved. We intend to spoil him now."

And spoil him they did, not just his family, but the people of Sarasota as well. They celebrated with gratitude his 33 years in the community, during which he served not only as pastor, but also as chaplain to the police, sheriff, and fire departments and the veterans organization, and as a friend to all whom he met.

— taken in part from the Sarasota Herald Tribune

The Princess and the Queen At Linwood Brethren Church

Linwood, Md. — The Linwood Brethren Church recently had the honor of having both a princess and a queen among its members.

The princess was Dawn Blacksten, who is now a senior at Francis Scott Key High School in Carroll County, Md. To her surprise, Dawn was chosen to be the princess at the junior-senior prom last spring.

Dawn has been an active member at Linwood, serving as Sunday school secretary and as a teacher in the nursery class. She has also been an avid church camper for many years.



Princess Dawn Blacksten

She comes from a long line of Linwood members, including her parents, Ronnie and Barbara Blacksten; grandparents, Wilbur and Betty Blacksten, and great-grandmother, Eva Blacksten.

The queen was Mrs. Grace Nusbaum, a member for well over 40 years of the Linwood Brethren Church. Mrs. Nusbaum (86) is a resident of the Westminster Nursing Center, where she always greets you with a cheery smile and enters into the activities of the home.

One such activity was the Nursing Center's 18th Annual Queen Contest. For her talent presentation, Miss Grace, as she is called, read the poem, "The Touch of the Master's Hand," complete with an old violin. Then she led the assembled group in singing "Give Me That Old Time Religion." She took first place in the talent competition, won the contest, and was crowned queen.

In addition to her own involvement in the church, Mrs. Nusbaum's family is active in the congregation. Her daughter-in-law, Francis Lowman, is treasurer of the church. One of her twin grandsons, Wayne Lowman, is modera-



Queen Grace Nusbaum receives her crown.

tor and a Sunday school teacher. And Wayne's brother, Warren, though in the military, maintains a vital interest in the church, as evidenced by his recent gift to Pastor Bob Keplinger of a liturgical stole with the Jerusalem cross on it (see February EVANGELIST p. 17).

— reported by Pastor Bob Keplinger

James Kirkendall Ordained July 18th At the Brush Valley Brethren Church

Adrian, Pa. — James E. Kirkendall was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church and his wife, Judy, was consecrated as the wife of an elder in a special service held Sunday, July 18, at the Brush Valley Brethren Church, where Rev. Kirkendall serves as pastor.

Rev. Dave Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church, led the service and brought the message. He was assisted with the ordination by Rev. Keith Hensley, pastor of the Pleasant View (Vandergrift, Pa.) Brethren Church and member of the Pennsylvania District Board of Oversight.

Jim Kirkendall was born September 12, 1946, in Pittsburg, Calif., and grew up in California, where he attended Manteca Union High School and San Joaquin Delta College. He worked for 20 years in retail management and a year in restaurant management before entering the pastoral ministry.

When in his early 30's, he joined the Stockton Brethren Church. In the years that followed he held numerous offices in that congregation and in the Northern California District, including serving as the 1990-91 district moderator.

In 1985 he came under conviction

that God was calling him into full-time Christian service. He was licensed in the Stockton Church the following year

under the direction of the elders in the Northern California District. One of his chief mentors was Rev. William Anderson, who, upon his retirement, gave Jim most of his theological library.

In 1991 he was called to pastor the Brush Valley Brethren Church, where he has served since March of that year.



Rev. and Mrs. James Kirkendall (c.) with Rev. Dave Cooksey (l.) and Rev. Keith Hensley.

and began assisting the pastor of that congregation, as well as preaching at the other two Brethren churches in the district during pastoral absences. He also took Bible correspondence courses and engaged in a reading program un-

He currently serves as moderator of the Pennsylvania District.

Jim and Judy (born in Sacramento, Calif.) were married July 6, 1966. They have two grown children, James and Angela, both of whom live in California.



Adrian, Pa. — This past May was not only a time for the birds to sing at the Brush Valley Brethren Church, but also for the angels in heaven to join in the chorus. On May 23, Pastor Jim Kirkendall baptized 23 members into the congregation. Due to the number of people being baptized and the outside temperature, members Randy and Denise Hooks volunteered the use of their heated swimming pool for the baptism. Pastor Kirkendall and those baptized were most appreciative.

— reported by Tim Lewis, vice moderator

David E. Morrison Ordained a Brethren Elder At the Mt. Pleasant, Pa., First Brethren Church

Mt. Pleasant, Pa. — David E. Morrison was ordained an elder in The Brethren Church and his wife, Susan, was consecrated as the wife of an elder in a service held May 16 at the Mt. Pleasant First Brethren Church, where Rev. Morrison serves as pastor.

Rev. Henry Landis, pastor of the Mt. Pleasant Church of the Brethren, gave the message for the service. Also participating in the service were Rev. Robert Blank, retired pastor of the Mill Run, Pa., United Methodist Church; Brethren elders Rev. Robert Hoffman and Rev. Bill Yoder; and Mt. Pleasant members Don Daniels and Charlotte Kwak.

Special music was presented by Sandy Weinman, the Mt. Pleasant Children's Choir, Mrs. Ina Daniels, and Rev. and Mrs. Morrison; Vicki Beal recited the poem, "A Divine Mission"; and the prelude was played by Susan Morrison and Ina Daniels.

David Morrison was born October 5, 1947, in Chiopyle, Pa. He accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior at age 12 while attending the Mill Run Evangelical United Brethren Church. He was



Rev. and Mrs. David Morrison and daughters Jennifer (r.) and Emily.

active in the church's youth group and choir as well as in Youth for Christ, where he met his future wife, Susan Reyes of South Connellsville, Pa. The couple sang together for many church activities and graduated from Connellsville Joint High School together in 1966.

After attending the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, David served in the US Air Force from 1968-72. After his return from a year's tour in Thailand, he and Susan were married on January 25,

1970, one week after Susan's graduation from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. The couple lived near Springfield, Mass., until 1972, when they returned to Pennsylvania. Susan began teaching in Connellsville area schools, while David attended California University, graduating in December 1974 with a degree in elementary education.

In 1985 David began schooling through the United Methodist Church at Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C., while serving as a lay pastor and pulpit supply. In 1988, he accepted a United Methodist Church pastorate in Chiopyle, Pa. Then in March of 1990 he became pastor of the Mt. Pleasant First Brethren Church. Since 1990 he has completed the Brethren course of study, testing, and interviewing at the district and denominational level for ordination.

In addition to his pastoral responsibilities, Rev. Morrison teaches fifth grade at C.N. Pritts Elementary School, where Mrs. Morrison teaches first grade. The Morrisons have two daughters, Jennifer (Potosky), who works with handicapped adults; and Emily (17), who attends Business Careers Institute in Greensburg, Pa. The Morrison family had a musical ministry together while the girls were growing up, which is now continued by David and Susan.

Bethlehem Holds Special Event To Kick Off 2nd Year of POTP

Harrisonburg, Va. — The Bethlehem Brethren Church held an "unscheduled" Passing On the Promise event on Sunday, September 5—a lunch to kick off the church's second year of POTP.

As the Bethlehem Brethren enter their second year of the POTP process, this seemed like a good time to summarize where they had been and done, and to build interest and enthusiasm for what lies ahead.

Right after the worship service, all interested Bethlehemites were treated to a deli-style luncheon. A cake with the words "One Down and Two to Go" summed up the program that followed.

Using the POTP timeline, Co-coordinator Kathy Velanzon summed up each event, activity, study, survey, and special day of the first year. Then the doorway to the coming year—the results of growth workshop I—were shared to build interest for the future.

"We see the first year as the foundation-laying and attitude-building time," Mrs. Velanzon said. "We realize that it

was necessary to just 'follow the manual' and do the work. Now it is time for the proof of the pudding, and we eagerly look forward to 'Reaching Out in Word and Deed' this fall and to 'Inviting and Welcoming New People' in the spring."

"We want to encourage the first-year POTP churches to persevere," she added. "Just do it!"

More Prayer is Recommended At Midwest District Conference

Derby, Kans. — Prayer was the focus of three recommendations made by the Recommendations Committee at the Midwest District Conference, held June 25-27 at the Derby First Brethren Church.

The committee recommended (1) that each church begin at least one and preferable two weekly prayer groups devoted solely to prayer; (2) that each church establish two 24-hour church prayer vigils during the year; and (3) that each member set aside one time or day of fasting and prayer a month and practice a daily devotional and prayer life. A fourth recommendation called on each church to promote participation by

each member in Communion at least once a year.

Moderator Sue Hurd, a registered nurse and a member (and wife of the pastor) of the Cheyenne, Wyo., Brethren Church presided over the Conference and presented a message at the opening session. Also giving messages at the conference were Rev. Dave Cooksey, Director of Pastoral Ministries for The Brethren Church; Rev. Russ Gordon, Director of Brethren Home Missions; and General Conference moderator Rev. Glenn Grumbling.

The conference also included a talent show, a Communion service, several business sessions, and concluded with a fellowship meal.

Twenty-two delegates (19 lay, 3 ministers) were seated for the conference. Business included reports, elections, and other items. Officers for the coming year are Chris Nelson, moderator; Rev. Mark Britton, moderator-elect; Cindy Smith, secretary; Marilyn Minor, treasurer; and Carolyn Tucker, assistant secretary/treasurer.

Next year's conference will be held June 10-12 at the Falls City, Nebr., First Brethren Church.

"Becoming Progressive Again" is Theme Of District Conference in Pennsylvania

Meyersdale, Pa. — Speaking on the conference theme, "Becoming Progressive Again," Moderator Bill Yoder challenged Brethren to become progressive in knowing Christ, obeying Christ, serving Christ, and sharing Christ, in his address at the Pennsylvania District Conference held July 22-24 at Camp Peniel.

In addition to presenting this message, Rev. Yoder presided over the several business sessions of the conference, which were attended by a total of 76 delegates (63 lay and 13 ministerial). In addition to receiving district and denominational reports and taking care of routine business, delegates approved several changes to the district constitution and by-laws.

Action was also taken to establish a district task force to make a year-long evaluation of past, present, and future uses of Camp Peniel. The task force is to study the district's goals and objectives and how the camp fits into these, as well as the priority of scheduling of the camp facilities in relation to district goals. Appointed to the task force were Rev. Robert Hoffman, Don Rosie, Pastor Ralph John, Pat Pyne, Adele Ritchey, and Jamie Galespie.

According to the district statistical report, in 1992 the 22 churches of the Pennsylvania District averaged 1,369

in worship attendance; gained 133 members; lost 332 (259 by "reversion") for a net loss of 199 members; and ended the year with 1,673 members. Five churches — Main Street (Meyersdale), Masontown, Mt. Pleasant, Pleasant View, and Sergeantsville—showed a net gain in membership; three stayed the same; and 14 showed a net loss.

In elections, Gerald Zook was chosen moderator-elect; secretary Debbie Knappenberger, assistant secretary Nancy McGraw, treasurer Grace Grumblin, and assistant treasurer Pat Pyne were all re-elected to their positions; and Norman Menhorn was elected statistician. Rev. Jim Kirkendall, pastor of the Brush Valley Brethren Church, is the new moderator.

The conference opened on Thursday with an all-day seminar on "Spiritual Formation," led by Ashland Theological Seminary professor Dr. Jerry Flora. Three mini-seminars were also held on Friday afternoon: "Vision for the Church," led by Dr. Fred Finks; "Building Church Relationships," led by Rev. Dave Cooksey; and "GCEC Explanation," led by Rev. Marlin McCann. Rev. Jim Kirkendall presented the moderator-elect's message on Saturday morning.

Next year's conference will be held July 21-23 at Camp Peniel.



Milledgeville Organist Marian Haugh

Milledgeville Church Honors Organist Mrs. Marian Haugh

Milledgeville, Ill. — Marian Haugh was honored Sunday, August 15, by the Milledgeville Brethren Church for her 38 years of service to the congregation as organist.

The special recognition for Mrs. Haugh began during the morning worship service, when some of her favorite musical selections were presented as special music. Two poems written in her honor were read by Judy Pettenger and Lucile Woessner. Pastor Kenneth Sullivan's sermon, "Rejoice in Another's Honor," also paid tribute to Mrs. Haugh.

Mrs. Haugh was given the day off from her responsibilities at the organ, and she was able to enjoy the service in the company of her sister-in-law, her nephews and their wives, and a number of her cousins, who sat with her during the worship hour.

Following the service, she joined 30 of her relatives for a dinner at the home of her nephew and his wife. The meal was followed by a reception at the church in her honor, sponsored by the Brethren Beacons Woman's Missionary Society. Approximately 140 people stopped in to express their appreciation to Mrs. Haugh for her service to the church.

In addition to serving as organist, Mrs. Haugh has been a member of the Woman's Missionary Society for many years and filled various offices in the society. According to Mrs. Haugh, the highlight of her years as organist was being able to play for the wedding of her grandniece, Susan Livengood Meadows.

She expects to be a part of the ongoing ministry of the Milledgeville Brethren Church as long as the Lord gives her the health to continue.

— reported by Lorraine Haugh

Lift for Physically Impaired To be Installed at Ardmore

South Bend, Ind. — What has been a dream for many years at the Ardmore First Brethren Church took one more step toward becoming reality on Sunday, August 8, when the congregation broke ground for installation of a lift system for the physically impaired.

The Ardmore Church facility is a nice, two-story, brick building constructed in 1969. The sanctuary is at ground level, and the fellowship hall and classrooms are in the basement, with 17 steps between them. These steps have been a hindrance not only for some members of the congregation, but also to people the church has been trying to reach.

According to the pastor, Rev. Bill Shipman, "Getting down is not the problem, it's getting back upstairs. Some of our more mature saints suffer pain for up to a week after navigating the stairs to attend a function important to them."

A two-stop, in-line lift will be installed. The total project will cost



Breaking ground for the lift at the Ardmore Church are (l. to r.) Bill Kidder, Ministry of Property chair; Moderator Mark Dale; and Pastor Bill Shipman.

around \$42,000 and is projected for completion by mid-November.

"We are praising God for His faithfulness as we move ahead with this dream," said Pastor Shipman. "Dreams do come true!"



Little Crusader



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

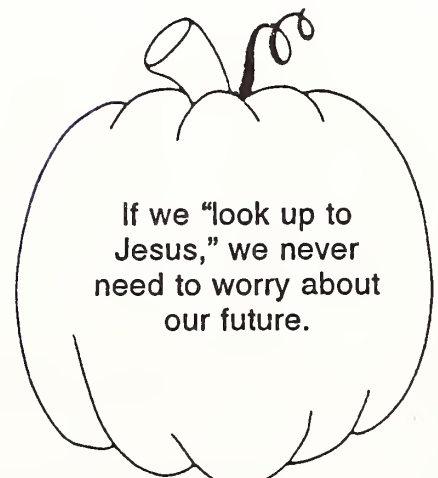
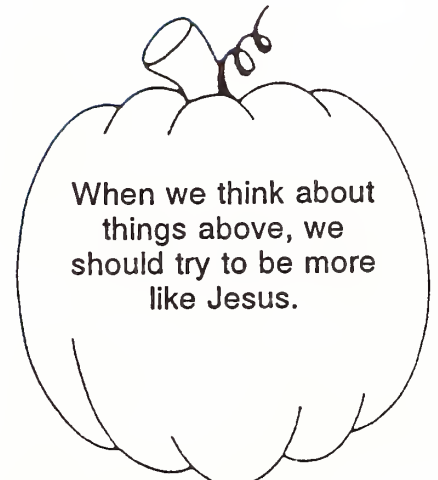
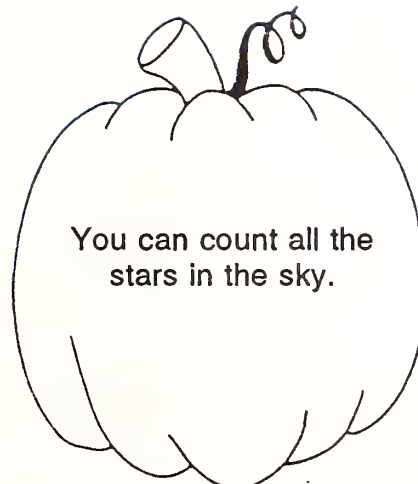
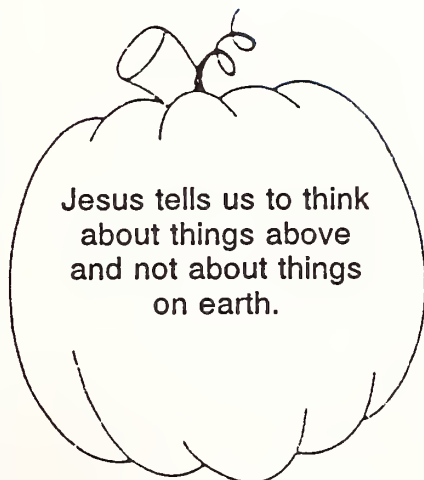
Did you get to see the meteor shower that took place in August? My family and I went outside and watched the sky. We have never really taken the time to just gaze up at the heavens above. We saw many star formations, and we even tried to count all the millions of stars.

Some of the most beautiful scenery in our world is in the sky. Sometimes we forget to look up and see all the beautiful things above that God has created. When we look up, we see new things—different from those we see on earth.

Did you know that Jesus wants us to look up, too? In Colossians 3:2, He tells us to set our minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. That means that we are to think good thoughts. Say kind things to others. Forgive those who treat us wrong. When we do these things, the Bible says that our future is "hidden with Christ."

When we look up and focus on good things, we don't need to worry about our future. God will always take care of us!

Color the pumpkins that have a true sentence in them.



Two Deacon Couples Ordained Aug. 22nd At the College Corner Brethren Church

Wabash, Ind. — Mike and Gay Shoemaker and Rick and Debbie Sweet were ordained as deacon couples in a service held Sunday morning, August 22, at the College Corner Brethren Church.

Rev. Glenn Grumbling, pastor of the College Corner Church, led the worship service, which had been planned in its entirety by the Sweets and the Shoemakers. Rev. Duane Dickson, former pastor of the congregation and the officiating clergyman at the weddings of both couples, presented the message for the service.

Using Acts 6 as the basis of his message, Rev. Dickson emphasized the importance of deacons and deaconesses being totally committed to Christ and of their leading by example. He also called upon members of the congregation to support these new deacon couples as well as all their deacons and deaconesses by their actions and their prayers.

All current active and inactive deacons and deaconesses were invited to



New deacon couples at College Corner (front, l. to r.) Rick and Debbie Sweet and Mike and Gay Shoemaker, with Rev. Duane Dickson (back, l.) and Pastor Glenn Grumbling.

join in the laying on of hands for the new deacon couples. The service concluded with Lori Lawson singing as an altar call the Ray Boltz selection "That's What This Altar Is For." A moving show of support was demonstrated as nearly all in attendance went to the altar in an attitude of prayer.

— reported by
Bonnie Lawson



Bryan Church Says Farewell To Interim Pastor Earl Thomas

Bryan, Ohio — Members of the Bryan First Brethren Church gathered at a pot-luck meal on Sunday, September 12, to say farewell to interim pastor Dr. Earl Thomas and his wife, Irene.

Dr. Thomas, a retired United Brethren Church pastor, came out of retirement to serve the Bryan Church. He commuted each weekend (and sometimes during the week) from Indianapolis, Ind., to minister to the church. He served the congregation for eight months.

The congregation showed its appreciation to the Thomases for their ministry at Bryan by presenting them a beautiful floral arrangement, a picture, a love offering, and numerous cards.

— reported by Louise Bishop, cor. secretary

Huntington Becomes "Ark Park" for V.B.S.

Huntington, Ind. — The sanctuary and classrooms of the Huntington First Brethren Church became an "Ark Park" this past summer for a week of vacation Bible school.

Stuffed animals, animal posters, and life-sized animal stand-ups and murals provided an imaginative setting for exciting Bible studies, singing, and craft work. Bible classes were named for birds and animals: Macaws (beginners), Tigers (primaries), Zebras (middlers), and Lions (juniors). An animal puppet show was presented each evening.

Two interesting sidelights of this V.B.S. were that four sets of twins attended, and that a family of four (mother, father, son, and daughter) taught the large primary class.

— reported by Roxie E. Stahl and Judy Lee, V.B.S. director



Standing in front of the Ark Park sign are the four sets of twins who attended the Huntington First Brethren V.B.S. — (l. to r.) Sean Pearce, Kristi and Kari Lee, Shane and Shannon Ross, Michael Pearce (identical twin of Sean), and Jerod and Jeremy Wynkoop.



West Alexandria Completes Shelter House

West Alexandria, Ohio — After two years and much labor by members and friends of the congregation, the shelter house of the West Alexandria First Brethren Church was ready for its first big event.

That event was a fish fry, held Saturday June 26, attended by members of the church and their relatives and friends. Approximately 200 enjoyed the food, fellowship, and entertainment by the Southernaires and other singing groups.

A dedication service for the structure is planned for this fall. It will be an all-day event, with food, fun, and games following a regular Sunday morning worship service.

— reported by Luella Painter

From The



Grape Vine

The Flora, Ind., First Brethren Church has called Jeff Gilmer to serve as associate pastor. Jeff, a 1993 graduate of Ashland University, is assisting Flora pastor Rev. Alvin Grumbling, who has reduced his workload in order to provide family care. Jeff is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Arden Gilmer of Ashland, where his father pastors Park Street Brethren Church.

Rev. Robert Schubert, associate pastor of the Lanark, Ill., First Brethren Church, was recently approved by the National Ordination Council for ordination in The Brethren Church. A retired elder in the United Brethren Church, he served the Lanark Church as interim pastor for eight months prior to the arrival of Pastor Jim Garrett. Since Pastor Garrett's coming, he has continued to serve the church as associate pastor.

Rose Davis, a member since 1907 of the Cerro Gordo, Ill., Brethren Church, celebrated her 95th birthday on July 19. Her church helped her celebrate with cake and punch after the morning worship service on July 18. According to reporter Shirley Powell, Rose is still very active—even walks to church and mows her own yard.

Dale and Delores Hurt and Mrs. Judith Heying were commissioned as deacon and deaconesses in the South Bend, Ind., First Brethren Church during the September 11 Sunday morning worship service. Dr. Lee Solomon, pastor of the Winding Waters Brethren Church, was the guest speaker for the occasion, and he assisted Pastor Larry Baker with the commissioning service.

Walter Davis, a member of the North Manchester, Ind., First Brethren Church, was

honored September 19 at a special reception at the church on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

Immediately following the recent earthquake in India, World Relief of NAE began sending emergency supplies for 500 to 1,000 families in that country. The supplies (tents, medicines, clothing, blankets, food, utensils, and safe drinking water) will be distributed by the Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief. Your contributions to Brethren World Relief through

your local church or sent directly to The Brethren Church National Office at 524 College Ave., Ashland OH, 44805 help provide these much-needed supplies.

Note: The area of India served by the Brethren Mission in India was not damaged by the earthquake. Rev. James R. Black, Executive Director of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, was in Visakhapatnam, India, at the time, and did not feel the quake, although the tremor was felt at Rajamundry, where the Kumars live.

In Memory

Paul Cofield, 72, September 8. Member for 47 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church, where he served as an usher and was a member of the men's fellowship. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Ida Belle Hanna, 98, September 7. Charter member and deaconess of the Kokomo First Brethren Church and former member of the Burlington First Brethren Church. Mrs. Hanna was the mother of Brethren elder Rev. G. Bright Hanna. Services by Rev. Dennis Sigle, pastor of the Burlington First Brethren Church.

Paul Metzger, 79, September 7. Member of The Brethren Church at New Lebanon. Services by Pastors James Black and Ray Hesketh.

Alvia Littell, 75, August 19. Member of the Muncie First Brethren Church, where he served as a trustee, greeter, usher, and treasurer of the Mature Brethren group. He also was a volunteer at a local hospital, where he shared his faith as opportunities arose. Services by Pastor Keith Bennett.

Kyle Dark, Jr., 71, August 4. Member of the Muncie First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Keith Bennett.

Adda M. Sibert, 95, June 5, at the Brethren's Home, Flora, Ind. Member of the Mexico, Ind., First Brethren Church. She was the widow of Brethren elder Rev. Floyd S. Sibert, who died in 1972. Services by Rev. Martha Cory of the Howard Church of the Brethren.

Weddings

Patricia Bland to Charles Keplinger, September 11, at the Ashland University Chapel; Rev. Robert Keplinger, father of the groom, and Rev. Randy Saultz, associate pastor of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, officiating. Groom a member of the Linwood Brethren Church.

Eileen Jean Walls to Robert Orner, September 11, at the Vinco Brethren Church; Rev. Carl Phillips officiating. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

Jessica Waddell to Todd Anderson, September 4, at the West Alexandria First Brethren Church; Pastor David S. Olgee officiating.

Tressa Griffith to Travis Golden, September 3, at the St. James Brethren Church; Pastor Brian Moore officiating. Bride a member of the St. James Brethren Church.

Amy Lynn Kline to Lee Scott Manda, August 28, in Canton, Ohio; Rev. Robert L. Keplinger and Rev. Terry Colley officiating. Bride a member of the Canton Trinity Brethren Church.

Phyllis Plank to Charles Haughs, August 20, at the Flora First Brethren Church; Pastor Alvin Grumbling officiating. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Milledgeville: 4 by transfer
Pleasant View: 5 by baptism



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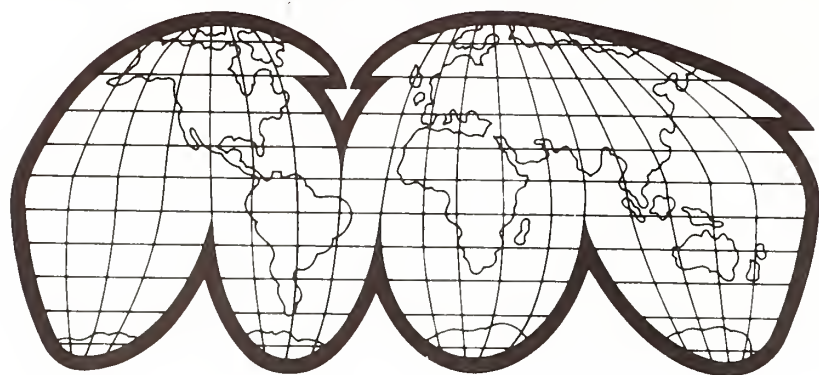
NOVEMBER 1993



**STAKE-ing a claim for Jesus Christ
in Florida.**

See pp. 13-14.

Developing a Global Vision



by
**John
Maust**

A Good Thing Going

AS A MISSIONARY JOURNALIST, I talk to lots of missionaries and read their prayer letters and reports. Sometimes I run across a missionary who is depressed or disillusioned. (A writer once complained that missionary letters tend to be "preachy, angry, folksy or whiny.") But the vast majority of short- and long-term missionaries talk enthusiastically about their work.

Vicki Weir, a recent college graduate from Charlotte, North Carolina, spent a year in Latin America with a short-term program. When she came home, Vicki said, "I've been a Christian for years, but I've grown more spiritually in this last year than in my whole life. God has helped me know who I am and how I can serve Him better."

Giving and receiving

Greg Sigvaldson of Dublin, California, recently took a short-term mission trip to Mexico. Afterward he described the experience in glowing terms. Not only had his team given, but it had received.

"I was impressed that Fabiola, the youngest daughter in the house where I stayed, gave up her bed and bedroom for my missionary partner and myself," he wrote. "In her 20s, Fabiola went and shared a bed with her sister. Before this trip, I doubt whether I as an adult would have slept with my brother if a missionary from Mexico visited us."

Career workers, too, assess their missionary vocation with an eager eye. How encouraging, for instance,

to see the passion for Christian service of Tim and Jan Eagle and Todd and Tracy Ruggles, new Brethren missionaries in Mexico.

So why do we often think missionary work is boring, tedious, and even second-rate? Sometime even the missionaries themselves express surprise that their experience turned out so well.

Seeing the needs

Maybe one value of short-term missions is that it allows Christians to witness spiritual and physical needs first hand. Also, they can observe missionaries in action.

Yes, the "practical" thing for a college student to do during summer is work—pay off those bills. But what better investment in one's Christian life and the lives of others can a person make than spending a summer (or longer) stint overseas?

One of the biggest missionary booms in U.S. history occurred just after World War II, when Christian GIs—deeply moved by the needs they'd seen in Asia, Europe, and other nations—returned overseas to fight a much different kind of battle in God's army.

A whole new vision

Similarly today, Christians who take a short-term mission trip often return home with a whole new vision for the world, and even for their own backyard.

Short-term workers from Big Valley Grace Community Church

in Modesto, California, had a successful ministry in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. "It was unquestionably life-changing for all involved," said a Big Valley pastor, Lonnie Skiles.

But the story didn't end there. Returning home, team member Diane Warn felt convicted about the need to share Christ in Modesto just as she'd done in Mexico.

Diane got permission to conduct children's Bible clubs in a predominantly Hispanic apartment complex. And before long her church conducted an evangelistic outreach there. Almost 100 people accepted Christ in just two nights of meetings. Now Big Valley plans to start a daughter congregation to handle all the new believers.

False stereotypes

Maybe you are debating the idea of missionary service, whether short or long. First get rid of the false stereotypes, such as:

- Missionaries are perfect. Wrong! Just ask one.
- Missionaries have all the answers. Wrong again. You'll never have *all* the answers. Only God does. Go as a learner.
- Missionaries are serious. Yes, about their commitment to Jesus Christ. But they don't check their sense of humor at the door. Fun is *not* prohibited on the mission field.
- Missionaries never have doubts. Come on, do you know anyone who never has doubts?

Missionary service is not for everyone. But if you find yourself curious to know more, if you feel comfortable around people from another culture, even if you find yourself reading this article, maybe God is trying to tell you something.

The late missionary statesman John R. Mott once said, "Without a doubt there comes to many of us the choice between a life of contraction and one of expansion; a life of small dimensions and one of widening horizons and larger visions and plans; a life of self-satisfaction or self-seeking and one of unselfish or truly Christ-like sharing."

If you sense God calling you to missionary service, don't rest until the matter's settled. You won't be disappointed. [†]

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The November-December *Woman's Outlook Newsletter* is in the center of this issue.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:

There are no answers provided for this month's *Little Crusader* page. What are you thankful for? Did you write a letter to Jesus?

Pontius' Puddle



Thanksgiving: *Attitudes of the Heart*

By David Hoyt

With "Thanksgiving Reflections" by members of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church.

EVEN THOUGH CAUGHT UP in the overdrive of this world, followers of Jesus Christ can still have inward peace and radiate thankful hearts.

How can this be, with so many difficulties invading our lives unexpectedly? Pressures tug and pull relentlessly. Hurts and interpersonal problems arise at work, in our daily contacts, and in family life. Disappointments, set-backs, illness, the death of loved ones turn our world upside down in one crisis event after another. Intense anger or feelings of failure throw us into a negative tailspin. Heart-wrenching circumstances cause us to ask hard questions of God: "Where, O God, is Your protection, justice, mercy, love?"

As Christians, we have God's promise that He can speak to us by His Holy Spirit, giving us understanding and perspective. We have a living God and Savior who comforts and who is able to reveal His boundless love to us in all circumstances, even those that are deeply painful. He gives us hope and support and creates within us a thankful heart!

God's love shines through the darkness

In life's most difficult obstacles, God's love can shine through the darkness! He walks with us through the most severe crisis.

Could anything good come out of the Holocaust? Yes, a humble and deeply inspiring person named Corrie ten Boom! She was a Christian woman of great integrity and honesty, who learned the miracle of forgiving and loving those who

had been responsible for the torture and execution of her family. And she, in turn, has taught the Body of Christ worldwide those same lessons.

Hidden in the pain and tragedies of life are also the cleansing miracles sent to rid us of selfishness and an ungrateful spirit. God's mercy heals us as we serve in faith and obedience, giving birth to compassion that helps us grow up in Jesus Christ.

A working partnership with God

Germinating and sustaining a heart-attitude of thanksgiving is achieved by having a working partnership with God! It requires a hungering and thirsting and seeking on our part for deep communion with God in the Holy Spirit. It grows as we meditate on His holy word and practice patience in His presence, letting His Holy Presence saturate our being. Allowing Him to comfort and teach us soothes and heals the pains and discouragements of life. As we trust Him for a resurrected attitude, He produces in us the spiritual fruit of being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

We can also see "this attitude of spiritual gold" lived out in the lives of those who have gone before us. Bible characters, Christians throughout history and in God's church today, and even those in our own families provide living examples of God's shining grace. This heart-attitude of thanksgiving is sometimes caught when we interact with those who have intentionally chosen to live close to Jesus Christ. There's nothing "ho hum" about their dependence on God or their personal commitment to dedicate themselves wholly to God on an everyday basis! Such models and

mentors are a huge help to us!

Thanksgiving attitudes of the heart are also grown in the soil of the big and little happenings and miracles of daily living. They spring forth in appreciation for God's tender mercies, which awaken us in the morning and give us rest when we're exhausted. They find fertile soil in family ties and close relationships, among fellow believers, and with the unsaved. Overflowing joys and blessings show us God's great love over and over again.

It's neat to look for God's active work in our family, at work or school, with our close friends, and among those to whom we are reaching out. We give thanks for His answers to prayer; His help in daily living; the wonder of being forgiven and of having salvation in Jesus Christ! God continues His good work in our lives and never leaves us. The Lord is always near us in the Holy Spirit, sent by our Lord Jesus Christ to actively help us continue in communion with the Father.

A precious gift in the Body of Christ

A precious gift has been given to us in the many disciples who make up Christ's Body. We share lives of commitment, sorrows, listening ears, comforting arms and hearts, along with our victories and faith. We are natural lives touched by the supernatural hand of God! We all are in need of encouragement from God and from one another.

The following personal reflections have been shared by a handful of believers from Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland. They are our offering of thanksgiving to God, passed on to our larger, spiritual family, to strengthen, broaden perspective, and inspire hope.

Dave Hoyt is Pastor of Youth Discipleship at Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, Ohio.

Thanksgiving Reflections

IN THE MANY THINGS that come along in our lives, we should always try to give thanks because of God's love. Remember, and give thanks, all the time, because He is always upholding us and is there to guide us! Even if we don't have a convenient life, God is still with us, and that's reason enough to be thankful. There are many things we take for granted until we don't have them anymore, like health. Praise Him for the way He uses His family to love and encourage us during these times. There are times when we need to be with God's family, even when we're ill or depressed. I've found as I go to worship or meet with His people, that the Lord lifts my spirit, and I appreciate that.

— Bobbi Gilmer

(Bobbi is currently undergoing chemotherapy treatments for cancer.)

I WANT TO GIVE THANKS for people who serve. I'm especially thankful to the Lord Jesus Christ, because He is the greatest servant of all. We have all kinds of people who come in here to serve in a variety of ways. When we're thankful and express appreciation to them and also to God, it helps those who serve us to find greater personal satisfaction in their work. Otherwise, they might be cold or formal. We make friends with the attendants and nurses here, and quickly find out that there are those among them who need help themselves. God gives us opportunity for reciprocal relationships. Showing kindness is God's way, and being thankful is evidence that Christ is Lord in our lives.

— Dr. Delbert Flora

(Dr. and Mrs. Flora reside at Good Shepherd Home and Villa, a nursing home in Ashland.)

EVERY DAY I'm thankful for life. In the year I was born, a difficult birth like mine usually resulted in death. I'm also thankful for the life of the one who has been God's answer to prayer for a Christian husband. I give thanks, too, for the lives of our children, their spouses, and our grandchildren.

Each has been a unique blessing to me. Then, there are the members of our extended family and my friends' lives that have touched mine in special ways. Most of all I'm thankful for the continuing eternal life in heaven which is ours through faith in Jesus Christ. Thank You, Lord, for this present life and the life that will follow!

— Alberta Holsinger

I AM THANKFUL for the way I feel about my relationship with the Lord. The fears, anger, and other emotions that were out of control before have been brought under His peace. Whatever the difficulty, I now realize I don't have to do it all. There is a deep comfort in knowing God is in charge! He's holding me up!

— K.D. Tanner

THE THANKSGIVING SEASON is the time we remember things to be thankful for. How good it is to be thankful throughout the year! I'm thankful that God woke me up! We are humbled that He has shown His love and mercy and brought my husband and me to Him! Christ also brought our marriage together in a way we were never together before!

— Kim Tanner

IF I WERE TO MAKE A LIST of the things for which I'm thankful, I fear the list would be far too long. So I will share a concept on thanksgiving that underlies all those things for which I'm thankful. This perspective is: Jesus Christ is Lord! For this reason I don't need to take what I do or where I am, my accomplishments or my non-accomplishments, too seriously, because I know ultimately that He's in control! When my perspective is clear, my heart is then most thankful.

— Pastor Randy Saultz

I USED TO LIVE IN FEAR and I sought things to relieve the pain. Drugs, alcohol, anything to help me forget the hounding and empty void. When I came to Jesus Christ and made a commitment at

AA, I began to comprehend "Serenity" and "God's Peace."

I am learning to turn over to God anything I can't handle. Together, God and I can handle anything! It's a team effort. Every day, I'm grateful for His grace and guidance and for God's full acceptance and forgiveness! He is willing to meet me where I am and to work with me in an ongoing way, in a developing relationship. I've been fighting all of my life, but when I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, I connected with a supernatural power. I still cannot fully understand how giving up enables us to win, but in Christ I have found this to be true. He has made me a whole person! I know that wherever I am or whatever physical condition I may be in, I'm still part of the functioning Body of Christ. He has given me a role to play and a place of significance in His family.

— Greg Hepburn

(Greg has undergone 29 medical operations.)

WHEN MY DAUGHTER, Bonnie, had polio, she was very sick in the hospital, and many people helped her. She never neglected saying "Thank you," and she still does today, no matter what anyone does for her! I've thought of that over the years because some people forget the kindness and care shown to them and just walk away, but she doesn't. I'm thankful, too, for my husband, Charles, and his love and care for me. Even today he's planned an outing for our afternoon. I'm also thankful because I can see the hand of the Lord everywhere, in everything!

— Aida May Munson

WHEN I THINK of Thanksgiving and all that it means, I think of how God has provided in big and small ways, meeting all my needs and desires. He has put me and our family just where He wants us at this stage of our lives. I'm also very thankful for the many opportunities in our church life to serve and for the support and love I receive from staff rela-

tionships, volunteers, and the rest of our church. I'm very thankful, too, for the support my family and husband give me, allowing me, and continuing to push me, to be all God wants me to be.

— Sherry Van Duyne

I AM SO THANKFUL that I know the Lord, and I am proud of Him! When I drive to worship and Sunday school on Sunday mornings, I drive down Sandusky Street, and it reminds me of a time when I was in Russia. While there, I crossed many streets where police stood, guns in hand. I'm so thankful that I can drive down most any street and don't have to fear government police. We have many freedoms in America, and it's wonderful! I don't have to be afraid, and for that I'm thankful! I'm also grateful to be able to have money to give to the church and extra money to give in W.M.S. Thank Offerings.

— Helen Shively

SEVENTEEN YEARS AGO I was given 10-12 months to live, and I'm still here. God needed me for something! I had an acute case of a rare form of leukemia. My niece, who works in oncology, said they have no record of anyone surviving who has had this strain of leukemia.

As my recovery became apparent, one doctor, who wasn't a Christian, came in and plopped himself down on the bed and said, "Well, you have something I don't have."

"The healing power of God," I told him. "I keep telling you that!"

For treatment, a leukemia-fighting germ was put into my body through an unusual treatment that left 72 deep scars on my back and shoulders. For almost three months I was hospitalized, given chemotherapy, and received these treatments. After a while I was allowed to go home and then return to the hospital every 10 days.

I'm thankful for life! I'm also thankful for my husband, who helped me with my treatment needs and for those who loved and prayed in faith. And I'm thankful for the Lord Jesus Christ, who brought me to health again.

— Kathy Mack

I AM THANKFUL for my family, and for the awesomeness of the gift that the Lord has sent to us in Jesus Christ! His salvation and the new life we experience have been given freely. It is not earned by something we can do on our own, but it is God's gift. This makes me extremely thankful. Sometimes we may feel boxed in by things going on in government or society, but we have many more freedoms than most countries of our world, and for this, too, I'm very grateful. Praise Him for His protection and love that surrounds us every day!

— Ginny Hoyt

THANK YOU, LORD, for my family, good health, and how you provide for us! The Pilgrims were thankful for many things, and I'm thankful for the way things work out in our lives as we keep trusting the Lord. I sometimes thank God for helping me get through the hecticness of a day. Life is full of things over which we have no control, and I'm glad that He is always ready to provide us with strength and help. Thank you, Lord.

— Margaret Hess

I GOT A SECOND CHANCE relatively early in life when Jesus Christ received me into His family while I was in the midst of a separation and divorce. I'm thankful for His help and so much more: For the close relationship I have with my sister, my brother, and my daughter. For new friends who were there to offer me a meal or invite me to an activity I might enjoy while being with them. I can almost say I'm thankful for the crisis, because I would have probably never met the group of Christian friends that I now have today, or possibly never met the Lord!

My sister, Kim, and her family have been a great source of strength. I clung to her during my divorce, and she not only comforted me, but she was a realist and told me things would change and I would come through the darkness. During panic attacks I would focus on the negative. "Oh, my poor daughter, she'll never have good clothes

or be able to enjoy music lessons. How will I ever make up for that?" Those things are not essential. We are alive. Some of the world's greatest people didn't have all the things we are told are a must, yet they grew to be great people; people able to give of themselves! At the time I thought, "We're probably going to starve and have to pull a wagon on the street." None of that ever happened. The Lord has taken care of us wonderfully.

Before, I had an Old Testament view of God—thinking He would strike me dead with a lightning bolt—and I was in a constant state of fear. Now I'm beginning to know His unconditional love. When I mess up, He understands and is still willing to pick me up and say, "That's OK." I now see that I'm just like everyone else, and He cares about me. Pastor Arden touched on this when he told me, "If I were the only person in the world, Christ still would have suffered on that cross for me." I no longer see Him as throwing lightning bolts, though we pay for our sins by hurting God, ourselves, and others. But more importantly, the Lord is a God of love, greatness, and forgiveness.

When I feel gloomy, I can commune with God Himself. It doesn't matter whether I'm driving, at work, angry, or whatever comes up, I have a choice. If I'm upset about something, I know what I can do; I can pray about it! I worried about a lot of things in the past year, but I have found that God's ability to solve my problems is far greater than mine. When I pray, the answer comes ten times more clearly than I would have ever imagined. I'm very thankful that I'm aware of God like never before and that I can now talk to Him every day!

— Tara Halblaub

* * * * *

Truly, our God is an awesome God. He reigns from heaven above with wisdom, power, and love. Our God is an awesome God!

*Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty.*

*Just and true are your ways,
King of the ages.*

Revelation 15:3 [†]

THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST

How Brethren Understand God's Word

Second of two parts

This study was prepared by the Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication of The Brethren Church. Its preparation was a process that included writing, sharing with pastors and others for input, revising, receiving further input, then revising again. It was presented as a report to the 1993 General Conference, which made suggestions for minor revisions. These changes were then made and the Conference accepted the report.

"How Brethren Understand God's Word" is also being printed in booklet form, complete with Scripture reference notations and a bibliography. An announcement about availability and price of this booklet will be made soon.

Part one of this study appeared in last month's issue of the EVANGELIST (pp. 4-5).

Being a Community under the Word

The community of believers is the theme the Brethren have found in Scripture, the context in which we have read Scripture, and the context in which we have put it into practice. The central theme Brethren have found in Scripture is God's eternal purpose through history to form a people for His own glory. God began that purpose in the people of Israel and continues it today in the church, the community that is Christ's body. As His body, we are to grow to maturity in Christ and to be united in mind and spirit. Obedience to the Word is thus corporate as well as individual.

As part of our commitment to one another, Brethren read Scripture together to help one another understand and obey it. The early Brethren would test their interpre-

tations by discussing them with one another and by attempting to live out their decisions together. They were confident that the Holy Spirit would bring them to consensus in matters of faith and practice. They called this finding the mind of Christ. To assist this process, they practiced mutual submission, encouraging one another and accepting correction. When they could not agree, they would bear with one another and wait for consensus to develop. Thus, in their use of Scripture, they tried to find a balance between the opinions of the individual and the unity of the body.

Our Ideas about the Word: Historically

All readers of Scripture come to the Bible with certain ideas about how to interpret it and certain questions they want to ask of it. The questions they come with partly determine the answers they find. The ideas they bring can make understanding easier or more difficult. Brethren ideas about Scripture have been especially influenced by Anabaptism and Pietism, the two movements that were foundational for the early Brethren.

Both Anabaptism and Pietism had a high regard for Scripture, seeing it as God's Outer Word that testifies to the revelation in Jesus Christ. But they also held that the Inner Word, the Holy Spirit, is absolutely necessary in order to hear God's voice in Scripture. For both movements, obedience to the Outer Word demonstrates faith in God and love for Christ.

The early Brethren took very seriously their commitment to Scripture. They understood that

Scripture was the primary witness to their living Lord, Jesus Christ. They accepted what they read at face value and sought to obey it fully, as individuals and as a community. Though upholding the New Testament as their final authority, they believed that all Scripture was divinely inspired. They knew and used both testaments.

Over the years, the Brethren have remained fairly consistent in their approach to Scripture. Several changes in emphasis have occurred, however. During the nineteenth century, the traditional order or customs of the Brethren gained an authority almost equal to Scripture. The "Progressives" (the present day Brethren Church) reacted against this stress on the "old order." In their reaction, however, the Progressives tended to take a more individualistic approach to interpreting Scripture, giving less weight to the need to work for consensus within the community. Likewise, The Brethren Church, with its emphasis on educated pastors, moved toward a more reasoned approach to the faith. At times, we have tended to shift the primary source of authority from the Living Word, Jesus Christ, to the Outer Word, Scripture. Recently, as in the *Centennial Statement* of 1983, we have reaffirmed the primacy of Jesus Christ.

Our Ideas about the Word: Today

Brethren share many ideas about Scripture with other Protestant traditions. For example, we believe that a proper understanding of Scripture must take into account the history and culture behind it, as well as the words and grammar in which it is written. Readers of

“Brethren affirm that Jesus Christ is the center of Scripture, the key to understanding it. The person and message of Christ determine which issues are central and which are peripheral.”

the Bible must interpret every passage in its immediate context and in the context of the whole of Scripture. Similarly, we should interpret particular statements in light of universal scriptural principles. Like any other book, the Bible should be understood literally unless the language seems to be used in a figurative way. Symbolic passages should be interpreted in the light of teaching passages. These principles are useful in understanding any ancient book. As conservative Protestants, however, we believe that the Bible is more than just an ancient book; it is God speaking to us.

Brethren also differ from other Protestant traditions. Readers from different traditions have different starting points when they read the Bible. Even if they believe the entire Bible to be inspired, they still have their favorite emphases. For example, Lutheran interpreters begin with the distinction between law and gospel. The Reformed tradition begins with the sovereignty of God. Dispensationalists begin with their understanding of the Kingdom and the events of the end times. Pentecostals begin with their experience of the Holy Spirit. Readers from a liberation theology perspective, whether African-American, Third World, or Feminist, begin with the idea that salvation means social, political, and economic liberation. Brethren, like the Anabaptists before them, begin with the person of Christ, especially as witnessed to in the Gospels.

We cannot come to the Bible without any ideas about it; we need a framework of things we already know in order to understand something new. Problems arise

when we are unaware of our own ideas or make them so important that we will not let them be challenged or corrected by what we find in Scripture. Brethren have always been committed to testing biblical interpretations by the standard of Scripture itself. In our faithfulness to the Word, we should abandon any interpretations that do not meet that standard. The best safeguard against imposing our own ideas on Scripture is to be aware of our own approach to Scripture and the approaches of others, and then to let Scripture speak for itself.

Applying the Word

In order to apply the Bible to matters of faith and practice, we must decide how to compare Scripture with Scripture. Our starting point and our emphases will influence how much weight we give to the Bible's different elements. Brethren affirm that Jesus Christ is the center of Scripture, the key to understanding it. The person and message of Christ determine which issues are central and which are peripheral.

Brethren see both continuity and discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament. God's nature and purpose are eternal. God's revelation of that nature and purpose was gradual, coming to a climax in Jesus Christ. The Brethren understand Old and New Testaments in terms of promise and fulfillment: the Old Testament looks forward to Christ, and the New Testament witnesses to His coming and interprets His work. The Old Testament gives a partial picture of God's character and will; the New Testament contains "the perfection of Christ." Because of

the centrality and finality of Christ, the Brethren historically have claimed the New Testament as their only creed.

When the early Brethren studied an issue, they took a harmonizing, Christ-centered approach to Scripture. They used both Old and New Testaments and considered all relevant passages, but they allowed the New Testament to have the last word. Within the New Testament, the Brethren valued the Gospels because their witness to Christ was so direct; they assumed that the rest of the New Testament was consistent with the Gospels' witness. When deciding about faith and practice, they tried to harmonize differing passages. The Brethren practice of threefold communion, for example, was developed by harmonizing John's account of the last supper with the accounts in the other three Gospels. The Brethren were guided in all their interpretations by the teaching and example of Christ and the apostles.

In trying to apply Scripture, the Brethren have had many discussions about the relationship between scriptural principles and the forms in which they are expressed. As our practice of the ordinances shows, we have followed biblical forms in some instances in which other Christians have chosen to follow only the principles. But we have also acknowledged that eternal scriptural principles may need to be expressed in new ways in new cultural settings. We have not always come to the same conclusions. But we have tried to live out with one another the adage used by the Progressives: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity." [†]



Understanding the Bible

The Inner and Outer Words

By Dale R. Stoffer

THE IDEA of an “inner” and “outer” word may sound strange to our 20th-century ears. But as we shall see, the issues these concepts raise are quite contemporary.

The early Brethren, like the Anabaptist and Pietist movements from which they sprang, spoke of both an Inner Word and an Outer Word. The Outer Word was Scripture, God’s word written to show us the truth about Him and us. The Inner Word was the Holy Spirit, who, according to the Brethren, has written God’s law on the heart of believers as promised by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 31:31-34). These two Words formed an important balance for the Brethren.

The two “Words” always agree

The fundamental conviction about the Inner and Outer Words was that they would always agree because they are identical. Alexander Mack, the outstanding leader of the early Brethren, indicated that God’s law

is written in each believer’s heart, not by the hands of men, but rather by the Holy Spirit. This law which is inwardly written by the Spirit of God is completely identical with that which is outwardly written in the New Testament. All the latter had flowed from the inward, and is an express image of the inward living Word of God.¹

¹Alexander Mack, *Rights and Ordinances*, in *The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, William R. Eberly ed. (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1991), p. 85.

Dr. Stoffer, assistant professor of historical theology at Ashland Theological Seminary, is a member of The Brethren Church’s Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles on “Understanding the Bible.”

Both testify to the Living Word

The reason for this identity between the Inner and Outer Word is found in the conviction that both Words testify to the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ. In fact, Mack affirms that Scripture is “an express image” of the Living Word. This is the case because Scripture, especially the New Testament, represents the will and commands of the Lord Jesus Christ. Likewise, the Holy Spirit guides believers to understand the truth only as the Lord Jesus intends.²

A second reason for the identity between the Inner and Outer Words derives from the work of the Holy Spirit. Mack reminds us that it was the Holy Spirit who caused the writers of Scripture to pen only what He had ordained. And it is this same Spirit today who leads us to understand inwardly what Scripture teaches outwardly. Therefore, there should be a remarkable unity of faith among believers of all times and places because of the Spirit’s work in both inspiring the Outer Word, Scripture, and in leading believers to a correct understanding of it.³

Obviously today, Christians are hardly united; a quick scan of all the denominations listed in the *Yellow Pages* should demonstrate this. Yet the reason for our differences and divisions is certainly not God’s doing. Unity of mind and spirit among God’s people can be a powerful witness to the world. In fact, Jesus indicates that such unity can “let the world know that you [the Father] sent me” (John 17:23; see also v. 21).

Because both Words share one

²*Ibid.*, pp. 83–84.

³*Ibid.*, p. 83.

voice, the voice of Christ and God Himself, they are to be listened to and obeyed. It is this conviction that led the Brethren to their balance between the two Words. The Brethren historically have emphasized the importance of following the plain words of Scripture. Because it is Christ’s word to us through the Spirit, we are both to know and to do the truth we find there.

Mack was especially critical of those who felt, because of their “freedom in Christ,” that they needed to follow only the Inner Word and were not bound to the commands and statutes of the Outer Word. Mack relates that the outcome of this disregard for Scripture was that “no two of them were agreed concerning the basic principles of the Christian life according to the Scriptures, but rather they had as many laws as there were persons maintaining such haughty opinions.”⁴

A grab bag of theologies

How familiar this sounds! Today we still have those who flaunt their freedom in Christ, their special pipeline to the Spirit, or doctrinal pluralism. The result is a grab bag of theologies that allows people to pick whatever sounds best to them. Scripture must ever remain the standard of truth by which we judge all claims to truth. If someone’s pet theology does not measure up to Scripture, its source is not the Spirit of truth.

The Brethren have also insisted that the Inner Word is indispensable for the proper understanding of the Outer Word. No one can understand the spiritual intent of Scripture unless the indwelling Spirit is

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 86.

at work in that person's life. Generally speaking the Brethren recognized the priority of the Inner Word over the Outer Word. They noted that the outer always flows from the inner, that the inner must precede the outer, that the Spirit is the source of the inspired word.

At times, however, we have forgotten these truths and have over-emphasized the outward letter at the expense of the inward Spirit. Not only do we fall into the serious theological mistake of making God subordinate to Scripture, but we run the risk of such practical problems as doing things out of habit without understanding their inner meaning (ritualism); allowing the minutia of the law to take precedence over the spirit of the law (legalism); engaging in hypocrisy; and treating people in insensitive ways. (See Jesus' harsh criticism of the Pharisees on exactly these points in Matthew 23.)

Important implications

There are several important implications of this view of the relationship between the Inner and Outer Words. First, we affirm that because every believer has received the indwelling Spirit, every believer has both the right and responsibility to study and apply God's word. It is not necessary to rely on a pastor, professor, or pope to interpret Scripture for us, because the Spirit of Truth enables us to understand its meaning. But this means that we must also immerse our hearts and minds in Scripture in order to allow the Spirit to speak more profoundly to us.

Second, we must always remain open to the Spirit shedding new light on Scripture. Although Scripture remains the unchanging standard of truth for our faith and life, culture and philosophies do change. We must be sensitive to what the Spirit can say to us through Scripture concerning these changes (abortion, the New Age movement, pluralism, existentialism, for example). This is the reason why Brethren have avoided anything—creeds, dogmatic theologies, ritualism, formalism—that would limit or stifle the Spirit's ability to lead God's people to new insights.

Conservative and progressive

Because of these convictions, the Brethren faith is both conservative and progressive. Because our faith is rooted in God's unchanging word as the final authority for truth, we are a conservative people. Because our faith calls us to be responsive to our changing social setting by seeking the Spirit's guidance for new insights, strategies, and forms of ministry, we are a progressive people.

We must keep both aspects of our faith in balance if we want to avoid the dangers that exist at either extreme. Extreme conservatism leads us to ritualism and a failure to minister to the contemporary world; extreme progressivism leads us to slip away from the mooring of Scripture. Only as we maintain a proper balance between both the Inner and Outer Words can we maintain our course, guided by a commitment to both fidelity and mission.

A meaningful concept

The concept of Inner and Outer Words is meaningful across times and cultures. A new student at Ashland Theological Seminary from mainland China decided to take my course this summer on Brethren doctrine. In a paper on "The uniqueness of The Brethren Church," she shared this personal testimony about the Inner, Outer, and Living Words.

Brethren affirm that Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God, the one who reveals God fully and finally. Scripture is the Outer Word, the Word of God in written form. The Bible's authority comes from its witness to Christ as the Living Word. The Holy Spirit is the Inner Word who testifies to the Living Word, Jesus Christ, and who helps us to understand the Outer Word, Scripture.

The doctrine of these three "Words" enlightens me that the Bible is not an ordinary "plain" book, but has three "dimensions." Jesus Christ is the center of Scripture whose life, teaching, death, resurrection and living presence [have] shown us all we need to know about who God is and who we are. God communicated with us human beings finally through be-

coming flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. Scripture presents God's revelation to us; it is our only reliable source of knowledge about the mind and will of God. . . . The New Testament, because it witnesses most directly to Jesus Christ, is the final rule for our faith and life. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and now the indwelling Holy Spirit helps us to understand and obey the Scriptures. In other words, the Scriptures do not come alive for us without the Holy Spirit to interpret them to us and convict us of their truth.

Recalling my own experience on the way of faith, I appreciate the theory of the "Living Word," "Outer Word," and "Inner Word." I read the Bible out of mere curiosity when I was a college student because I had heard about it for a long time but I had no chance to read it during that particular political period in my country [the Cultural Revolution in China from 1966–1976 under Mao Tse-tung]. At that time, the Bible was a kind of famous literature (but not the best) to me. I felt that the Creation, historical events and the stories of Jesus Christ written in the Bible were novel and strange which could be read but could hardly be believed. I even wondered: "Well, this is the Bible itself. How can so many people in the world believe it?!"

As a Christian I read the Bible again (both English and Chinese). Unexpectedly, the words in the Bible are still novel but beautiful, for which I often thump the desk and say "Wonderful!" Even those huge and complicated family trees, which I skipped while I was reading before, are interesting to me now. I often read about Jesus Christ with tears and praise our Lord in the heart. I feel strange that I didn't have such feelings before.

Now I can understand that the Bible as the "Outer Word" cannot automatically become the foundation of our faith without the help of the Holy Spirit, the "Inner Word," and thus people cannot recognize and follow Jesus Christ, the "Living Word," which is the quintessence of the "Outer Word" and is testified by the "Inner Word." These three complete each other and none of them can be dispensed with.⁵ [†]

⁵Ning-Hua Wang, "The Uniqueness of The Brethren Church," Term Paper for Brethren Doctrine at Ashland Theological Seminary, 1993.

The Woman's Outlook Newsletter

A publication of the Brethren Woman's Missionary Society



November-December 1993

Volume 7, Number 2

The President's Pen

Dear Ladies,

Another Conference has come and gone. I trust you received a lot of inspiration from attending. I certainly did! It was good to see many of you at the WMS sessions. To those of you who helped on various committees, I thank you for your willingness to serve.

It's time to start a new year in WMS. Our new *Devotional Guide* is full of things to do to make our meeting exciting. Jan Sullivan did a great job putting this book together for us. Please try to use the ideas and see how much fun you can make your meeting. The articles will give you something to think about and will also spark some good discussion on spiritual things. The theme for the year is "Living for Jesus." Mark 5:14 reads, *You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.* Are you living for Jesus? Do you let those around you know that you are a Christian? Remember, we need to "live for Jesus" at work, at home, wherever we are. Others are watching and listening to see how we act and live.

Wasn't it great to have so many of our missionaries at Conference? I hope you had a chance to visit with them. The Ruggles and Eagles would love to hear from you. Drop them a line and let them know what your church is doing for missions.

My husband, Jim, is in India as I write this. He will dedicate the Girls' Orphanage that was the WMS project for the past two years. How exciting to be a part of that! He will go to Malaysia on October 7 and will be with David Loi and David Chew. He will share with them the WMS project for 1993-94, the endowment to help train workers in Malaysia. Keep Jim in your prayers. He left the states September 13 and will return October 27. A lot of traveling by air, train, and auto. He
(continued on page 4)

The Power of the Witness

Devotions given by Charlene Rowser August 3, 1993,
at the WMS Conference

Text: So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Picture with me for a few minutes a scene which took place nearly 2,000 years ago. Jesus, after being with His disciples for a very short three and one-half years, meets with them face to face for one last time. It has been 40 days since they experienced the agony of Jesus' death and then the glorious resurrection of the Lord. He has spoken to them of many things, but most particularly concerning the kingdom of God. There were so many questions on the disciples' minds, and they clung to every word He spoke. Foremost was a question which they now put to Him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom of Israel?"

There are two things we need to notice in Jesus' response to their question. First, He did not deny that the kingdom was going to be restored. Second, Jesus responded that there were some things that they were not to know, and He meant that for us today as well. You and I are not going to understand everything about events to come. We do not need to know the times or dates. Paul made mention of this, too, in I Thessalonians 5:1-2: *Now brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.* There are some truths God has chosen not to reveal to us, and Paul is, in essence, saying, "I'm not going to write to you about something that Jesus said I don't know a thing about."

Some things are revealed for our benefit, to help us live the way we should and to be what God wants us to be. But some things, by God's design, are secret, and one of these is the time when Jesus is going to come again.

Jesus warns us, "Don't get carried away. I'm going to come again, but I'll come when the Father wants me to come. You just live for me, witness for me, and serve me until I do come again."

Oops, I said that feared word—witness! Right here at the heart of that verse is the pivotal word for the book—witness. Acts is the "Witness Book," someone has said, because throughout the book people are being witnesses. So let's think about verse eight.

Let's look first of all at the source of our witnessing. Jesus said, "You will receive power." We've all heard sermons about the meaning of this word "power" being "dynamite"—the dynamite of God—an explosive power. Where does that dynamite come from? The Holy Spirit! When we receive the Holy Spirit into our lives as believers, we receive that dynamite—that power to be witnesses. You are never the same person again!

I remember, when I was a kid, the Charles Atlas ads that often appeared on the back of comic books. If you remember, Charles was a puny weakling who was always getting pushed around. In one episode Charles was on the beach with his girlfriend, and a big, burly bully kicked sand in his face and flirted with his girlfriend. What could poor Charles do? He found some barbells and started working out. You know the end of the story. Soon his muscles bulged, and the next time the bully kicked sand in his face, Charles jumped up and took the bully apart piece by piece!

Until the Holy Spirit enters our lives, we are weaklings, but when we
(continued on page 3)

Missionary Miscellany

Pray continually for the safety of our missionary leaders: Jim Black, Russ Gordon, and Juan Carlos Miranda. Juan Carlos will travel in South America from October 15 through November 2. He will visit Peru, Argentina, and Colombia. Jim will be home from his Asian trip the end of October; Russ travels mostly in the States, visiting the home mission pastors.

The Missionary Board's annual budget meeting is November 10-11. Pray for their wisdom in making important decisions. Always the needs are more than the funds.



When Tracy Ruggles spoke to the WMS ladies at Conference, she requested prayer for their return to Mexico City. Their stuff included some of Tim and Jan Eagle's, so their truck was full. Tracy's letter, dated August 23, recounts their journey and the wonderful answers to prayers.

Dear Family and Friends:

Just wanted to take a few minutes to tell you we arrived in Mexico City safely. There were many people praying for us, so it's only fitting to tell you of the wonderful answers to those prayers!

To begin, we made it to McAllen, Texas, on Saturday morning. After traveling 1,700 miles, we made it to the insurance company with only 10 minutes to spare before the company closed for the weekend. We needed to purchase a type of car insurance here that covers us driving in Mexico, since US coverage is not applicable over the border.

Second, after the insurance, we took our truck in to have the tires rotated. We were pulling a lot of weight and didn't want to wear the tires bald. The place that rotated the tires didn't even charge us for the services.

Third, we went from tires to getting a new tailpipe put on the truck, since we lost ours in Arkansas. Again, there was no problem with this either. Except, when we were about to drive away, the truck just died. The jump start didn't work, and we had no way of telling if it was the battery or the alternator.

Fourth, we had AAA membership, so we were towed to a garage free of charge. The garage was only a 5-block walk away from our hotel. We were told, however, that it could be Monday until it could be looked at. We prayed

over the truck and the situation, and then got a good night's sleep.

Fifth, when we arrived at the garage on Sunday, the mechanic had already fixed the truck. It was only the battery. A check was run on the charging system and the alternator was OK.

Sixth, since it was already afternoon by the time we finished with the truck, we stayed in McAllen another night and rested well. We headed out early on Monday. We were at the border and received our paperwork easily, and by 6:30 a.m. we were well into the border area.

Seventh, when we arrived at the second checkpoint, about 20 miles in, we were told to pull over because the guard had to check our things in the back. Since you couldn't find an extra inch of space in the back of the truck, we were really dreading this. Also, we knew we were bringing things in that technically on our tourist visas we couldn't bring. Well, when we opened the tailgate and some things fell out of place, the guard just shook his head. He asked us if we could tell what was in the boxes and bags. We told him we could. He then just said, "Go!" Needless to say, we didn't stick around. We weren't searched and even our papers for insurance and passports weren't checked.

Eighth, we arrived in Mexico City 13½ hours later. This is an answer to prayer because the trip was calculated to take 18 hours. In fact, we arrived at our house the same time that Tim and Jan were landing at the airport in Mexico City.

So, as you can see, the trip went well. God truly does answer prayers, provide the things we need, and protect His children. Please feel free to share these answers of prayers with anyone.

Thank you for your prayers; they are the reason we made it here safely. May God bless you all.

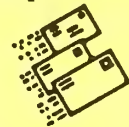
In His service,
Todd and Tracy Ruggles

Daniel Rosales will return to his home town in Villa Constitucion, Argentine, as the evangelist for a Crusade December 11-19. The advanced preparation needs the Lord's guidance: newspaper and radio publicity, trained counselors and youth workers, strength for Daniel and all the Crusade team. Daniel and Kathy will take their children to the same city where he first found Christ as his Savior in 1978. You are invited to be a prayer partner, beginning now. Let Christmas

have a new meaning to those who hear the gospel and accept Christ as their Savior. Their goal is to win 300 people to Christ.

In addition to pastoring the Hispanic congregation in Sarasota, Daniel is a radio and television evangelist.

We are always aware of the medical and relief programs in India, which are important outreach ministries of Prasanth and Nirmala Kumar. Although the devastating earthquake was not in their area of that huge continent, it makes us more aware of the poverty and needs of the Indian people. Pray for the Kumars' ministry and the relief efforts of other Christian agencies who help.



Bill and Sharon Winter are seeking employment and will work in church planting. Their address is:

5565 Federal Blvd., Sp 60
Denver, Colorado 80221

Ray and Marilyn Aspinall moved to Bryan, Ohio, in September as the new pastoral family. Their address is:

Route 4, 13-108 RD C
Bryan, Ohio 43506

Missionaries-of-November are the special ministry workers: Doran and Nancy Hostetler at Riverside Christian School, Lost Creek, Kentucky; Bonnie Munson, Phil and Jean Lersch at Brethren House in St. Petersburg, Florida; and Bill Curtis, supervisor of Hispanic Ministries, Tucson, Arizona. Russ Gordon is the director of U.S. Missions.

The December missionary families are Sonia and Miguel Antunez and their son, Carlos, in Lima, Peru; and Juan and Beatriz Anzulovich and their children, Andrea, Martin, and Ruth, who live in Asuncion, Paraguay.

THE WOMAN'S OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

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Woman's Outlook Newsletter

The Power of the Witness

(continued from page 1)

allow the Holy Spirit to fill us, we have those muscles—the power to witness.

What keeps us from witnessing? Fear, usually. It takes courage to tell another person about Jesus. We're big, old "fraidy cats." But Jesus promised us power; we just need to claim it.

That's the source of our witness, but what about the substance of our witness? Jesus said, "You shall be *my* witnesses. You will witness about me"—not yourselves.

Just last week I read in our newspaper that my dentist had caught a steelhead that was 36" long and weighed 17 pounds. The Indiana state record for a steelhead is 26.47 pounds, so this was smaller, but it was the largest he had ever caught and he caught it on his 13th wedding anniversary. What stories he has to tell!

You don't have to be a celebrity, an all-American, Miss America, or even catch a big fish to win people to Jesus. You are not to witness unto yourself or to brag to people about what you have done, but you do need to testify unto Jesus, tell what Jesus has done in your life. That's the substance of your witness.

There is also a scope to our witness. Jesus said we will witness in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth—three ever-widening circles of witness.

We are to commence at what is probably the hardest place on earth to witness—right at home! People at home know all our failures, mistakes, all our inconsistencies, but if our Christianity doesn't work at home, it doesn't work anywhere! Who is at home that you need to witness to? A husband, a child, a parent?

Our widening circle takes us next to Judaea and Samaria—our neighborhood, our schools, our businesses. On the job, be a witness.

Our last circle—to the ends of the earth. Where you may not personally be able to go, you can give so others can go. You can pray for those who are able to go, and your witness will extend on, and on, and on.

W. A. Criswell wrote: "Pray, be sweet and tender. And witness to the lost that they might be saved." Just keep on doing the soul-winning work to which Jesus called you.

We are found to find others.

We are told to tell others.

We are won to win others.

We are saved to save others.

The following poem, "Christ—and We," by Annie Johnson Flint has long been a favorite of mine (bottom of next column):

At Conference, ladies from the Central District presented the memorial service for 35 members. This appropriate story from *Leaves of Gold* was adapted and read during the service.

"When I was a boy I used to think of Heaven as a glorious golden city, with jeweled walls and gates of pearl, with nobody in it, but the angels, and they were all strangers to me. But after a while my little brother died; then I thought of Heaven as that great city, full of angels, with just one little fellow in it that I was acquainted with. He was the only one I knew there, at that time. Then another brother died, and there were two in Heaven that I knew. Then my acquaintances began to die, and the number of my friends in Heaven grew larger all the time. But, it was not till one of my own little ones was taken that I began to feel that I had a personal interest in Heaven. Then a second went, and a third, and a fourth; and so many of my friends and loved ones have gone there, that it seems as if I know more in Heaven than I know on earth. And now, when my thoughts turn to Heaven, it is not the gold, and the jewels, and the pearls that I think of—but the loved ones there. It is not the place so much as the company that makes Heaven seem beautiful."

Christ—and We

Christ has no hands but our hands

To do His work today;

He has no feet but our feet

To lead men in His way;

He has no tongue but our tongues

To tell men how He died;

He has no help but our help

To bring them to His side.

We are the only Bible

The careless world will read;

We are the sinner's gospel,

We are the scoffer's creed;

We are the Lord's last message

Given in deed and word—

What if the line is crooked?

What if the type is blurred?

What if our hands are busy

With other work than His?

What if our feet are walking

Where sin's allurements is?

What if our tongues are speaking

Of things His lips would spurn?

How can we hope to help Him

Unless from Him we learn?

In Memoriam

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death
of his saints. *Psalms 116:11*

These ladies were remembered:

Southeast District

St. Luke Violet Fadely
Maurertown Lula Copp

Linwood Margaret Blackston

Pennsylvania District

Meyersdale Mary Schafer
Berlin Mabel Whitaker

Fairless Hills Rebecca Mentzer
Sharon Scott

Highland Katherine Burke
White Dale Lucy Kelly

Ohio

N. Georgetown Evelyn Mercer
Park St. Faith Grace Weidenhamer

Indiana

Bryan Addie Wineland
Frances Miller

Loree Anna Phermeyer
North Manchester Beulah Ridenour

County Line Marjorie Sommers
Milford LaVohn Amberg

Corinth Maggie Richards
Oakville I Marge Graves

Oakville II Dorothy Conrad
Roann Ruth Moser

South Bend Frances Aker
Warsaw Helen Galbraith

Bessie Provines
Helen Srivver

Florence Miller
Ellen Kiefer

Dorothea Nice

Central

Waterloo Marion Dietz
Lila Rulon

Milledgeville Beacons Leona Real

N. California

Stockton Maude Walters

Midwest

Falls City Gladys Yoder

Special Note

Please allow me to thank the many ladies of the WMS who have made my job as your vice president such a pleasant experience for nine years. I pray you will be as helpful to Judy Tinkel as she takes the reins, and I am sure you will.

In Christian love,

Helen

Helen Dickson



You deserve a trophy of appreciation! The special offerings are more than any of the previous six years, thanks to your generosity and desire to help others.

The two-year project offering given to provide an orphanage in India for girls totals \$22,439. This year's offering was \$11,965; \$491 more than the 1992 offering. (I rounded off the cents.)

The thank offering, which is used for Christian education in several areas (Riverside Christian School, Seminary, Ashland University scholarship, and Campus Ministry), totaled \$10,044. This is \$719 above last year's offering.

Accept your trophy with the blessings of being a cheerful giver.

Congratulations to —

- The Johnstown Third society for returning their subscription list and dues very promptly to Joanne Kroft. Other societies responded soon after, but the Johnstown ladies were first!

Distributing the subscription lists with the *Devotional Guides* at Conference was a new idea, and your ready response indicates the system worked. All subscription lists are to be returned to Joanne Kroft by October 31. However, if you are still holding yours when you read this (perhaps in mid-November), please send it. Make corrections on the same paper and return it. This is an important help to your officers.

- The Tuscon Faith, Hope, and Charity society for returning their statistical report to Grace Grumbling May 1. They received a postage stamp for being the first! The deadline of June 30 is to give Grace sufficient time to prepare her report and have it printed before Conference.

The President's Pen

(continued from page 1)

will have some new videos of our work in India and in Malaysia. Don't miss his visit to your church.

I would like to end my letter with a poem that was in a 1987 copy of the *Woman's Outlook*.

I Said a Prayer for You Today

I said a prayer for you today
And know God must have heard—
I felt the answer in my heart
Although he spoke no word!
I didn't ask for wealth or fame
I knew you wouldn't mind—
I asked him to send treasures
Of a far more lasting kind!
I asked that He'd be near you
At the start of each new day
To grant you health and blessings
And friends to share your way!
I asked for happiness for you
In all things great and small—
But it was for His loving care
I prayed the most of all!

God Bless You!
Shirley



The addresses of our missionary friends are on page 47 of the *Devotional Guide*. All of them appreciate your notes and greetings. When you write, I suggest you include our chaplains. They are special missionaries serving in the military. They, too, need and appreciate your encouragement and support.

Chaplain David Graetz (Gale)
1907 Westmoorland Way
Louisville, KY 40242

Chaplain Daniel DeVeny (Ann)
95th BSB CMR 424 Box 739
APO AE 09164

Chaplain Joe Hanna (Sara)
127 Cannon Drive
Traverse AFB, CA 94535-1348

Chaplain Kenneth Madison (Donna)
1920 Shadowood Drive
Columbia, South Carolina 29212

The Editor's Ending

Dear Friend,

The batter for Punkin Bars, page 9 in the *Devotional Guide*, is delicious, but here's the rest of the story. Don't stop with the batter in the pan. **Bake the bars at 350° for 20-25 minutes.** The batter is even better when it's baked.

And on page 11, the ending of Mariá Miranda's article isn't complete. Add these sentences: **Peace that goes beyond all human understanding! Joy! Gratitude! It's a worthwhile practice!**

When I re-read the story of the Christmas seal, the phrase "pass it on" jumped out. That was the purpose of the Christmas stamp (that was its original name)—to pass on Christmas.

In 1904, Mr. Holboell in Denmark made the stamp with only the word "Christmas." With a committee, he promoted the sale through post offices at our equivalent of 1/2 cent each. Proceeds were designated for building a hospital for children ill with tuberculosis. The slogan was "stamp out tuberculosis." The joy of passing on Christmas intermingled with the joy of helping to such an extent that no one—neither the committee nor the post offices—accepted payment. From this idea of one person, more than 4 million Christmas seals were sold!

The idea spread to the U.S. in 1907 and, in cooperation with the Red Cross, the same purpose and enthusiasm benefited a hospital and then tuberculosis patients, research, treatment, and a cure.

This story has two thoughts: (1) an idea and (2) share it. Never underestimate your idea. Don't hesitate to develop an idea, although you may need to try it with several people before it catches on.

And the joy of passing it on! This is appropriate this year. "Passing On the Promise" of the Lord's gift of salvation to reach those who are in need.

Through the denominational program of POfP, numerous reasons and numerous ways are given for passing on the promise. Another timely and simple act is to use the religious Christmas stamp. Secular groups reap enough benefits from the Christians' holy day. For the Christian, the Christmas stamp carries a message from you through the postal system to the receiver. It's a wonderful way to pass it on.

Your friend,

Joan

Joan

Woman's Outlook Newsletter



Turning Vision into Reality

By Russell C. Gordon, Director of U.S. Ministries
The Missionary Board of the Brethren Church

WHAT IS THE VISION of The Brethren Church in the area of Home Missions, you ask? Well, from my point of view I believe that it is to **reach** as many of the **unchurched** as possible here in the United States with the message of salvation and the hope that they can have through Jesus Christ. Involved in that is our **mission**, our **challenge**, and our **response**.

1. Our Mission

Jesus Christ authorized one central mission for the church during this age—and that is to “**make disciples of all nations [people]**” (Matthew 28:19). Thus, disciple-making should be the driving purpose of every local church.

2. Our Challenge

More than 80 million Americans of all races and ethnic origins are completely unchurched. Only one of every six Americans is vitally involved in any church! Our challenge is to plant healthy, growing, reproducing churches to make disciples of these people.

3. Our Response

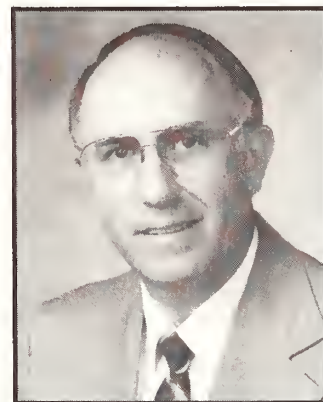
We must first envision our communities as God sees them—populated by men and women, teens and children who live and die without hope. Second, we must commit ourselves and our churches to sharing that hope with those who do not have it by whatever means necessary.

In order for this vision to be-

come a reality, it is imperative that we all realize that this is not something that the national

Missionary Board, district mission boards, or local churches can do alone. It must be a **joint** venture if the unchurched are going to be evangelized and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Together, we can turn vision into reality. [†]



Rev. Russell C. Gordon

What Is It Like to be a Home Mission Pastor?

By Todd Bonnett

Pastor of the Walcrest Brethren Church, Mansfield, Ohio

By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country Hebrews 11:9

WHEN ASKED, “What is it like to be a Home Mission pastor?” I had to sit down and do some serious thinking. Having grown up as a “Missionary Kid,” I had become accustomed to picking up and leaving all whenever, to wherever, and for whatever lay ahead, as long as God opened the doors. It was a way of life.

But as I thought longer about this subject, I began to identify somewhat with the way Abraham must have felt—or at least I thought it must be the way the rest of my family was feeling. For us, becoming a Home Mission family required an awesome move,

a great act of faith. It meant leaving close friends and part of our family to go to a place that was new, unknown, unexplored. It meant taking on different responsibilities, some of which we knew very little about. This required faith in God and assurance that this was His will for our lives.

God opened the doors

Before saying “Yes,” I visited the land. I saw the “giants” there. I assessed the difficulties that might lie ahead. My wife, Priscene, and I prayed, “If this is Your will for us, then open the doors.”

He did! God granted us absolute peace about this place. His promise went before us, reminding us that, “I, the Lord your God, am

with you; I will always be with you.”

Mission work is interesting and exciting. A part of the excitement is developing new relationships. Even so, during the early period of our Home Mission life, we felt quite lonely as we longed to hear from friends whom we had left behind. Establishing new relationships is very important, but sometimes they come slowly and can be difficult to establish.

One source of great encouragement to us has been the cards and letters that individuals and churches have sent to us. This written support and the constant prayer support have definitely been an asset to us as we have battled against the assaults of the Enemy (Satan). We praise the



Pastor Todd and Princene Bonnett with their children (clockwise from back, center) Trista, Tiana, Calissa, Cherlea, and Kira.

Lord for individuals and churches committed to helping us in this way. To them we wish to say, "Thank you!"

God's power at work

Another exciting part of being a Home Mission pastor is seeing God at work in lives touched by His word. Seeing a middle-aged person give himself to God and walk through the baptismal waters in total obedience. Seeing the beginning of new life, as a young person comes to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Seeing the discouraged and distraught become encouraged and excited as the Holy Spirit fans anew the flame within their hearts. Seeing God's people commit themselves to sharing the gospel with neighbors, friends, and family, urging them to enter the Kingdom of God. These, indeed, are exciting times!

It has also been exciting to experience the love and support of the core group that God has given us and to witness the changes that God is making in their lives as they come to know Him in a more personal way. This truly has been one of the most rewarding times of ministry, as we see God's power at work in the lives of His people and faith become an active

part of their daily lives. This is what it is all about when Jesus said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20). Because this command is for all believers, its effect compounds as it becomes our primary focus for ministry. When I see this focus become the focal point of other believers, I experience the greatest reward in ministry. God is definitely at work here!

Learning patience

One thing about mission work that used to frustrate me was having the patience to wait on God for the increase. Patience was never one of my greatest assets. I like to see things happen yesterday! I wanted to see people accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

I have learned, however, that I must be patient, realizing that God, and He alone, is the one who brings forth the harvest in His time. I have learned to commit myself to patiently and consistently working the fields, planting the seed, watering it, with the promise and hope of harvest. And

He is bringing forth the harvest!

Another discouragement in this ministry has been the attacks of Satan on the lives of our people and our family. These attacks of the Enemy have caused many setbacks, even resulting in the closing of a group to start again. But we are encouraged when we remember that if we were not experiencing some difficulties, it would be because we were not hurting Satan's cause.

Pray for the victory

Often the battles we face are unseen, spiritual warfare. It is for this reason that we encourage you to pray consistently, continually, and persistently that God will give us the victory over the darkness of this world. God has already won the battle!

As it was for Abraham when he ventured into a new country, we sometimes find it difficult to know what to do next. "Has this method been tried before? Was that ever tried? What were the results?" Setting direction and goals are among the hardest tasks we face. We cry unto God for direction.

Many times this direction is encouragingly given by national Missionary Board personnel. On more than one occasion they have been the tool used of God to bring us encouragement and support.

When discouragement comes, and it does, board personnel are right there, encouraging us and keeping us on track. Drawing on past experience, they have helped us focus our time and energies on the things that are most productive for ministry and growth. Their wise counsel has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated.

When we get down, they build us up. When we get discouraged, they give us a challenge. When we want to give up, they give us new perspective and direction. Why? Because their hearts are committed to the cause of Christ and missions. Praise God for those who minister to the ones in ministry! We are truly thankful!

Today the need for Home Mis-
(concluded on page 14)



Church-Planting in Florida

By David Stone

*Wish you
were here!*



THE BRETHREN CHURCH has staked a claim for Jesus Christ in the Sunshine State. The STAKE church-planting vision, developed by the Mission/Outreach Ministry of the Florida District and supported by the Missionary Board and many others of our denomination's national and district leaders, is to plant a large number of church cells in the west-coast and central regions of Florida. The first five cells are planned to begin in August 1994.

STAKE is an acronym for Saturation of the Target Area for Kingdom Extension. We will saturate the target area by beginning a number of cells in a metropolitan area at one time, thus increasing the visibility and name recognition of these new churches. "Kingdom extension" reflects the desire to develop these churches by reaching non-believers rather than by taking Christians from other congregations.

Planting this number of churches will be made possible by the use of teams of tentmakers. Tentmakers, individuals who support themselves in other jobs, will not be able to give the same quantity of time in ministry as full-time, salaried ministers. But teams of tentmakers can, as a group, give the necessary time to the church-planting effort. Furthermore, tentmakers will come into contact with more people because of their jobs.

A team has the advantages of accountability, a larger pool of spiritual gifts, fellowship, and support. Each team will consist of at least



They sure are building a lot of houses around here!

three tentmaker families who will meet weekly in a home. These teams, or cells, will grow and birth new cells for at least a year before the new churches meet for their first worship services. One tentmaker in each original cell will be the pastor of that cell. One of the original tentmakers will be the director for Phase One.

Phase One

The target area for Phase One is the area east and south of Orlando. One superhighway was just completed there and another is being built. In the next few years, 100,000 new homes will be constructed in the area. At least 300 new churches will be needed. The Brethren can help provide some of them. The harvest is indeed plentiful.

Phase One will be evaluated and used to plan for future phases. Four phases are now planned, one every two years. If each phase results in five new churches, 20 churches will be planted in the

central and west-coast regions of Florida by the year 2000.

Three things will determine the success of this project. The first is the power of God working through the prayers of His people. The second is tentmakers called to this work. And the third is jobs for the tentmakers.

God has already begun to meet these needs. Owners of employment agencies in the target area have expressed interest in helping to find jobs for tentmakers. Rev. Larry Bolinger has begun to form a group of businessmen who will share their expertise to help create job opportunities for the tentmakers. The Missions/Outreach Ministry has begun a job-placement commission to help meet this need as well. A few potential tentmakers have already found jobs in the area.

The response of potential tentmakers has been outstanding. As of August, three dozen individuals/couples have been identified as possible tentmakers. A recruiting

Rev. Stone is pastor of the Bloomington Brethren Church in Valrico, Florida.

video was shown at some district conferences and at General Conference. Also, copies of the STAKE plan were distributed. These resources will be made available to anyone who requests them. Members of the Missions/Outreach Ministry are speaking to groups at Ashland University and Ashland Theological Seminary this fall.

God's timing

God seems to have prepared the workers for STAKE at the same time that He has prepared the vision. The Christian influence at Ashland University is growing stronger. The enrollment (Brethren and non-Brethren) at the seminary continues to grow. Many of our young people express a desire to step out in faith and attempt something beyond human capabilities. The commitment and maturity of many of our youth demonstrates that God is ready to use the Brethren in new and exciting ways.

Many Florida Brethren have volunteered to serve on a prayer commission. Their main responsibility will be communicating news, praises, and prayer concerns to prayer intercessors around the country. More intercessors are needed. Although the mailing list of interested individuals numbers in the fifties, only a few of them are intercessors committed to praying daily for this effort. The goal is



You sure meet a lot of interesting people here. Even in the land of sunshine, they still need the Lord.

to have 200 intercessors. Perhaps the emphasis on prayer at the recent General Conference will spark the desire of the Brethren to pray more for revival and for plans such as STAKE.

Our world and the church need revival desperately. Our country has the fourth-largest unbelieving population of any nation in the world. The social and moral decay now evident to all is just a symptom of the spiritual emptiness of the last few decades.

Be a part of what God is doing today. He may be calling you to follow Him to a new place to do a new work. Or He may be calling you to stay at home and pray for others who enter this new work. But whether you remain at home

or come to Florida, STAKE a claim for God's kingdom. [†]

For information about how you can become involved in STAKE as a tent-maker, prayer intercessor, or in other ways, write to Rev. David Stone, Bloomingdale Brethren Church, 1310 E. Bloomingdale Ave., Valrico, FL 33594.

Home Mission Pastor

(continued from page 13)

sion pastors and church planters is greater than ever before. The mission vision must not die in our churches. We must grasp this vision—a vision for the very communities that surround our churches. If we fail to see the vision at home, it will be much harder for us to see it in a foreign land.

Encouragement is knowing that what we are doing is God's will for us at this time. It is knowing that the things being done in Home Missions are helping to enlarge the Kingdom of God.

It is a great honor to serve God in this place as a Brethren Home Mission pastor. What we ask of you is that you continue to support us with your prayers, letters, and cards. These constant reminders tell us that we have intercessors who are keeping us before God, helping us to win the battle over the Enemy. [†]



It's a nice place to visit, but I think I'd rather live here.

“Noah’s Ark” Playground Dedicated By Smoky Row Brethren Church

Columbus, Ohio — The Smoky Row Brethren Church held a dedication service Sunday, September 12, for its new “Noah’s Ark” playground.

The playground was designed by Smoky Row member Paul Scott and was built in its entirety by the men of the church.

The “ark” has three levels, a main deck, a higher aft deck, and a maze that runs underneath. The ark can be accessed by means of ramps, steps, a suspension bridge, a fireman’s pole, ropes, and two slides. The area is surrounded by a chain-link fence. The playground was built to provide a play area for the children of the church and also as a means of reaching out to the children of the community.

Paul Scott, Dale Weber, and Fritz Hubacher were chief foremen for the project. Dennis Shireman and Tracy Whiteside were in charge of promotion and fund-raising. The cost of the playground was approximately \$10,000.

The ark was built primarily in the 90-degree plus heat during the first two weeks of July. The men would come each evening to work on the project. Several women of the church provided meals for the workers. Finishing

touches on the playground were completed by September 10.

Pastor Tom Schiefer presided over the dedication. Dennis Shireman explained the background of the project. A plaque in memory of Sarah Scott was

presented by the Sunday school class for four- and five-year-olds. The children had gathered an offering to provide the plaque as well as paint for a rainbow, to be painted at a later date. The children also sang a song about Noah and his animals at the dedication.

Following the dedication, the church family enjoyed a corn roast hosted by the Fellowship Committee.

— reported by Gale Shireman



Smoky Row pastor Rev. Tom Schiefer presides over the dedication of the “Noah’s Ark” playground.

Photo by Mark Irvin.

Kurt Stout Licensed For Gospel Ministry

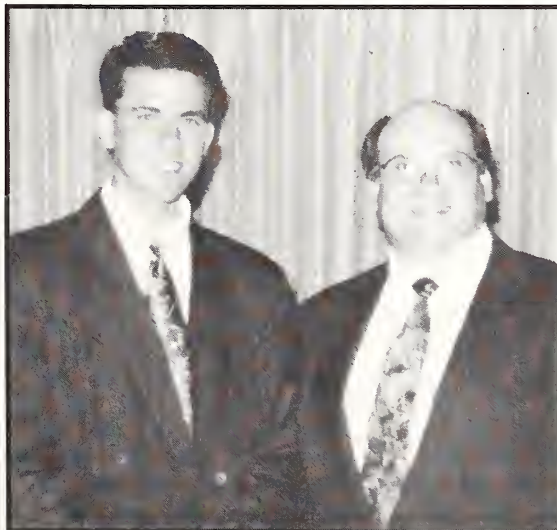
Burlington, Ind. — Kurt Stout was licensed for the gospel ministry during the morning worship service on Sunday, August 29, at the Burlington First Brethren Church.

Kurt, who grew up in the Burlington Church, is the son of Burlington members Allen and Cindi Stout. He is a 1992 graduate of Taylor (Ind.) University, from which he received a B.A. degree in biblical studies and Christian education. He is now in his second year at Ashland Theological Seminary, where he is working toward a Master of Divinity degree with a concentration in missions and spiritual formation.

Kurt has been active in the Brethren Crusader Program, serving twice on Summer Crusader music teams and three summers as a Crusader Intern.

Rev. Dennis Sigle, pastor of the

Burlington Church, presided over the licensing ceremony. Immediately following the worship service, Kurt conducted his first baptism, baptizing his niece, Cassandra Carter. Assisting with the baptism were his father (a deacon in the church and also Cassandra’s grandfather) and Pastor Sigle.



Kurt Stout (l.) with Pastor Dennis Sigle.

Dr. Fred Finks Given Dual Title at ATS/AU

Ashland, Ohio — The Ashland University Board of Trustees has given Dr.



Dr. Fred Finks

Frederick J. Finks the dual title of President of Ashland Theological Seminary and Vice President of Ashland University.

According to Ashland University President Dr. G. William Benz, the title President of Ashland Theological Seminary better reflects the position Dr. Finks fulfills as chief executive officer of the seminary than did his former title, Ashland University Vice President for the Seminary.

At the same time, the title Vice President of Ashland University acknowledges Dr. Finks’ role at the university on the President’s Cabinet and in other duties assigned by the president.

Bryan First Brethren Church Welcomes Pastor Raymond and Marilyn Aspinall

Bryan, Ohio — Members of the Bryan First Brethren recently welcomed Rev. H. Raymond Aspinall as their new pastor.

Rev. Aspinall and his wife, Marilyn, were officially welcomed by the congregation at a luncheon held Sunday evening, September 26. Approximately 80 people attended the meal. During the gathering, many gifts were presented to the Aspinalls.

The Aspinalls come to the Bryan Church following 30 years of missionary service in Argentina. During that time Rev. Aspinall served variously as director of Eden Bible Institute, dean of missions of the Interdenominational Theological Seminary, and visiting professor at several seminaries. He was also an active member of the Argentine Bible Society, of which he served on the board of directors.

Rev. Aspinall is a graduate of Ashland University, has a B.D. degree from Ashland Theological Seminary, and a



Rev. Ray and Marilyn Aspinall

master's degree from Fuller Theological Seminary School of World Mission.

Ray and Marilyn have three grown children and nine grandchildren.

— reported by Louise Bishop, corr. sec.

Report Gives Statistics On Elders and Pastors In The Brethren Church

Ashland, Ohio — At the end of 1992, there were 177 ordained elders in The Brethren Church, according to a report prepared recently by Rev. Ronald W. Waters for the *Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches*.

Of these 177, slightly less than half—87 (49%)—were serving Brethren congregations as pastors or associates; 24 were serving The Brethren Church in other capacities (as administrators, chaplains, missionaries, faculty and staff at Ashland University and Theological Seminary); and 36 others were retired. The remaining 30 were not serving in any ministry capacity in The Brethren Church (although some were serving congregations in other denominations).

In addition to the 87 ordained elders serving churches, 28 unordained persons were serving as pastors of Brethren churches and an additional 17 persons were serving as church associates (including youth pastors, Christian education coordinators, etc.).

Chaplain J.D. Hamel Honored By Sarasota City Commission

Sarasota, Fla. — Dr. J.D. Hamel, pastor emeritus of the Sarasota First Brethren Church, was honored recently by the Sarasota City Commission with a mayor's citation in recognition for his 33 years of voluntary service as chaplain to the Sarasota police and fire departments and the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office.

According to a "Newsmaker" article by staff writer Mike Spencer that appeared in the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, Hamel's bond with emergency workers stems from the 1950s in Illinois, when his daughter suddenly became ill. A fireman resuscitated her and took her to a hospital 30 miles away.

Hamel made a promise to the Lord at that time to help police and firefighters. He even completed a firefighting course so that he could better understand the demands of the job.

"I pray, and they spray," says Hamel. But he does more than that.

Over the years, he has counseled people threatening suicide, directed traffic at wrecks, helped officers cope with stresses such as divorce, presided at memorial services, and played "Taps" on the bugle at veterans' funerals.

"He has a good appreciation for the stresses and the kind of challenges a

public safety worker endures," said Fire Chief Julius Halas, who has known Chaplain Hamel for 19 years. "With his compassion and his personality, he is so uplifting."

And Lt. Bill Stookey, a Sarasota county sheriff's spokesperson, who has

known Chaplain Hamel for 20 years, added, "Not only is he a good man and a good minister, but he's one of those rare people who's around when people need him."

— taken from an article that appeared in the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

Milledgeville Church Conducts Old-Fashioned Worship Service

Milledgeville, Ill. — An old-fashioned Brethren worship service was held Sunday morning, September 19, at the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

In accordance with Brethren practice

of years ago, the men sat on one side in the meeting house (sanctuary) and the women on the other. There was no printed order of worship for the service. Hymns were "lined" and sung without accompaniment. Old-fashioned clothes, dark colors, and bonnets were in style for the day.

— reported by Lorraine Haugh



Worshippers at the old-fashioned Brethren worship service at the Milledgeville Brethren Church.

Photo by Melva Staples.

Little Crusader

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

What are you thankful for? I think that if you were to make a list of everything for which you are thankful, you wouldn't have enough paper to write it all down!

During this Thanksgiving season, we are reminded to give thanks for all our blessings. But what about the not-so-nice things that happen to us? Should we be thankful for those things, too?

The Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 that we are to be joyful **always**, pray **always**, and give thanks in **all** circumstances. This means giving thanks **ALWAYS** no matter what happens in our lives. This can be a really tough thing to do. But if we think of the wonderful thing that Jesus did for us—dying on a cross so that we can spend forever with Him—then we will want to say, "THANK YOU, JESUS!" **always**.



Think of at least 10 things for which you are thankful. Then think of at least two things that have been a disappointment in your life. Write a letter to Jesus thanking Him for all of these things. Don't forget to tell Him how thankful you are that He died for you.

Retired Pastor Robert Bischof Honored As New Paris, Ind., Citizen of the Year

New Paris, Ind. — Rev. Robert Bischof, a retired Brethren pastor, was recently named the 1993 New Paris Citizen of the Year.

"Pastor Bob," as he is known in the community, was chosen for the award from a field of 16 candidates nominated by townspeople and local service organizations. Bischof was surprised by the honor, for he didn't even know he had been nominated and had no idea who had done so.

Pastor Bob and his wife, Beatrice, have lived in New Paris since 1972, the year in which he became pastor of the First Brethren Church there. Before that, he and his wife had served as Brethren missionaries in Nigeria, West Africa, for nearly 15 years.

Bob (71) retired from the pastorate in 1988. But that didn't mean the end of ministering. He just does it now through less formal channels. He's out in the community every day, if for no longer than for his daily two-mile walk through the neighborhood. And for more than two decades he has been a volunteer chaplain at Goshen General Hospital.

"He's always busy pastoring and visiting," said his wife, Beatrice, who has been quite active in the community herself. Recently retired from full-time

work at Greencroft Nursing Center, Bea, a registered nurse, continues to work at the facility part time, as well as assisting neighbors with some of their medical needs.

Others echo Beatrice's words. "He's done a lot of ministering and is an all-

around nice guy," said selection committee member Ray Dausman. "Rev. Bischof is well-respected in the community."

A banquet was held in Bob's honor on Monday, October 11, during which he was presented a plaque.

The Bischofs have been married 45 years. They have two children and three grandchildren.

— taken from an article by Julie Moore in the PAPER; submitted by New Paris Pastor Brad Hardesty



Rev. Bob Bischof, with his wife, Beatrice, at his arm, receives the New Paris Citizen of the Year award from Chamber of Commerce president Ray Dausman.

Bryan Church Mission Team Makes Visit to Riverside School

Bryan, Ohio — Thirteen members of the Bryan First Brethren Church experienced togetherness, joy, and the satisfaction of a labor of love this past summer on a mission trip to Riverside Christian School at Lost Creek, Ky.

Making the visit to Riverside School July 23-25 were Brenda and Brad

Hugg; Ann, Carmen, and Brian Cummins; Tony, Andrew, and Daniel Stever; Josh Shairbaum; Michael and Matthew Smith; Anna Moog; and Daniele Stickney. They spent most of their time at the school painting five rooms in the newly-constructed addition, removing seats from an old school bus, and helping with kitchen chores. They did take time off to take a tour of the area, led by Doran and Nancy Hostettler.

Carmen Cummins said about the

trip: "We have been blessed by God with families that love and provide for us, and we appreciated this opportunity to share our love, time, and possessions with those at Riverside School. The fellowship of people from our own church and the staff at Riverside, especially Doran and Nancy, provided memories that we will treasure a lifetime."

— reported by Louise Bishop, corr. sec.



The Bryan mission team (l. to r.) Tony Stever, Brenda Hugg, Andrew Stever, Ann Cummins, Josh Shairbaum, Anna Moog, Brian Cummins, Daniele Stickney, Michael Smith, Daniel Stever (front), Matthew Smith, Doran Hostettler (Riverside administrator), Brad Hugg, Nancy Hostettler, and (not in picture) Carmen Cummins.

Moving? Address Changing?

Please let us know. Otherwise, you will not receive your copy of the EVANGELIST, since the post office doesn't automatically forward 2nd class mail. And to make matters worse, a postal worker will tear off the back cover, return it to us, and charge us 35 cents.

So we'll both be better off if you let us know of any change in your address. Copy your old address from the back of the magazine and send it with your new address to: Address Correction, The Brethren Church, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805. Thank you.

— The editor.

From The



Grape Vine

Rev. Daniel Rosales, pastor of Iglesia Hispana de Los Hermanos (the Hispanic Brethren Church) in Sarasota, Fla., will be returning to his home town, the city of Villa Constitucion in Argentina, to lead an evangelistic crusade to be held December 11-19. The event will be advertised in the local newspaper, and Rev. Rosales's radio program, *Reflexiones*, will be broadcast on local radio until the crusade. The youth of the Villa Constitucion Brethren Church are also being trained to saturate the city with personal evangelism efforts before the crusade. Plans call for the last night of the crusade to be shown on local television. Brethren are encouraged to be in prayer for the success of this crusade.

John and Eleanor Lynch, members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church, Vandergrift, Pa., were commissioned on Sunday, September 12, for special service in the Pittsburgh, Pa., First Brethren Church. The five-year commissioning gives John the authority to carry out the duties of pastor at the Pittsburgh Church. The Lynches have been serving the Pittsburgh congregation for a year.

Jungle Aviation and Radio Service (JAARS) pilot **Skip Holmberg** was the guest speaker at the morning worship service on Sunday, September 12, at the Vinco Brethren Church (Mineral Point, Pa.). Holmberg spent five years in Brazil and two years in the Sudan as a JAARS pilot and one year in Liberia setting up flight programs for Wycliffe Bible Translators. He presently serves as director of programs and events for JAARS at Waxhaw, N.C. He has had many hazardous and exciting experiences, and he shared how God has met his needs in the air and on the ground.

"God is not dead, [and] neither is the **Sarver Brethren Church!**" according to interim pastor Rev. Arthur J. Tinkel. On October 11, Rev. Tinkel completed one year of service at the Sarver, Pa., Church, a period of time he characterizes as "a year of prayer and work" in which "we have seen God work in a

marvelous way." On October 3, eight people came into membership in the church, four by first-time baptism and four by rebaptism (believers' immersion). These brought the total for the year to nine by baptism (4 first-time, 5 rebaptism) and two (Pastor and Mrs. Tinkel) by transfer. "We give God all the glory, but remember, we must pray for one another!" Rev. Tinkel said.

Ashland Theological Seminary is sponsoring an 18-day trip to Israel,

Petra, Sinai, Cairo, Luxor, and London, scheduled for June 11-28, 1994. The trip will be hosted by Dr. and Mrs. David W. Baker. Dr. Baker is professor of Old Testament and Hebrew at the seminary. Cost of the trip is \$2,888 from New York or \$2,965 from Detroit. For more information, contact Dr. Baker at Ashland Theological Seminary, 910 Center St., Ashland, OH 44805 (office phone: 419-289-5177; home phone: 419-289-6143).



Dr. J. Ray Klingensmith, professor emeritus of religion at Ashland University, received a surprise from his religion class October 8 for his 86th birthday. The students brought him a cake during class, then escorted him to a carriage that took him and his wife, Christine, on a campus tour. Owner (and driver) of the carriage was Willis Lehnhart, a friend of the Klingensmiths from a Lucas, Ohio, church that Dr. Klingensmith used to pastor.

AU photo by Randy Sarvis.

In Memory

Albert R. Tharp, 77, October 14. Member for 40 years of the Cheyenne Brethren Church. Services by Pastor G. Emery Hurd.

Joseph N. Miller, 86, October 13. Lifelong member and deacon for 20 years at the Loree Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Thomas.

Waiva Corwin Taylor, 83, October 11. Member for 69 years of the Bryan First Brethren Church, where she served for many years as a Sunday school teacher and was a member of the W.M.S. Services by Rev. Fred Brandon and Pastor Ray Aspinall.

Agnes Rose, 74, October 8. Member for 65 years of the South Bend First Brethren Church, where she had served as church secretary, choir director, pianist, W.M.S. president, and Sunday school teacher. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Louise M. Spohn, 77, October 7. Member of the Loree Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Thomas and Rev. Bennie Williams.

Charles D. Gaebler, 77, September 29. Member for 31 years of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann and Rev. Woodrow Immel.

Alice S. Conrad, 90, September 27. Member for 62 years of the North Manchester First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Marlin McCann and Rev. Woodrow Immel.

Harless John Ballard, 72, September 29. Member of the Loree Brethren Church. Services by Pastor James Thomas.

Margery Tanger, 68, September 24. Member of the Gretna Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Lynn Mercer.

Randy Gaskin, 23, September 14. Member of the New Paris First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Brad Hardesty.

Charles Teske, 75, September 14. Member for 47 years and deacon for 31 years at the South Bend First Brethren Church, where he also served as a trustee and usher. Services by Pastor Larry R. Baker.

Lucille Daniels, 82, September 4. Member for 12 years of the Ardmore Brethren Church. Services by Pastor William Shipman.

Goldenaires

Kenneth and Marjorie Newell, 50th, November 16. Members of the Flora First Brethren Church.

Dile and Rhoda Leidy, 60th, November 29. Members of the Vinco Brethren Church.

Weddings

Jami Klingensmith to Lynn Lerch, Jr., October 23, at the Pleasant View Brethren Church; Pastor R. Keith Hensley officiating. Members of the Pleasant View Brethren Church.

Marah Lee Nine to Kenton Grimm, September 25, at the Milford First Brethren Church; Pastor Paul Tinkel officiating. Groom a member of the Milford First Brethren Church.

Membership Growth

Sarver: 8 by baptism

Wabash: 2 by transfer

St. James: 1 by affirmation of faith

Pleasant View: 3 by baptism, 1 by transfer

BRETHREN HOME MISSIONS

I Peter 2:9: "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you MAY DECLARE the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light."

"CALLED TO DECLARE . . ."

. . . THROUGH THE WHAT of HOME MISSIONS

- Planting new churches
- Working with ethnic groups
- Strengthening older congregations
- Special ministry involvement

. . . THROUGH THE WHERE of HOME MISSIONS

Wherever there are people who do not know that Jesus can give them new life.

- Next door
- In the city
- In the country
- In another state

. . . THROUGH THE WHEN of HOME MISSIONS

NOW is the time! Jesus tells us in John 4:35, "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."

. . . THROUGH THE HOW of HOME MISSIONS

The national Missionary Board, district mission boards, local churches and YOU, responding to the task by praying, giving, and going.

NOVEMBER IS HOME MISSION MONTH

For more information on Home Missions, contact:
The Missionary Board of the Brethren Church
524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805
(419) 289-1708

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THE BRETHERN Evangelist

DECEMBER 1993





From the Manger to the Cross

By Kay S. Winfield

HOW FAR IS IT from Bethlehem to Golgotha? Most of us think of the Bible lands on such a grand scale that it is hard to realize that it is only ten miles between the two—Bethlehem, the place of Jesus' birth, and Jerusalem, the site of His death on Golgotha. The geographical proximity of the place of His birth and of His death is a poignant reminder of the reason He came and the sacrifice involved in each event.

The Sacrifice at His Birth

The Christmas story focuses on Jesus, the Babe in a manger, who *sacrificially* descended from His brilliant heavenly home to our dark earthly dwelling. In Philippians 2:5-7, Paul writes of Jesus' sacrificial entry into our world—

... Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God
something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

Another translation says that He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men."

Let's imagine Jesus' leave-taking from His heavenly home. In our mind's eye, we see Him begin the descent down a long stairway stretching from heaven to earth. On the top step He stands in majesty. On each step down, He removes one of His symbols of deity—first a crown, then a purple robe, next a golden ring ... the descent continues. On each step He sheds more of His God-apparel, and finally, on the last step, amazingly He lies as a human baby. The descent is complete—from the All-Powerful Son of Heaven to a helpless infant on earth.

None of us can fathom what it means

Kitty Winfield, a member of the Ashland Park Street Brethren Church, teaches English to international students at Ashland University.

for God to be born in a stable. It was the greatest condescension the world has ever known. Our minds cannot begin to comprehend what was involved in the incarnation—God becoming man, a man He knew would be rejected. And yet He came, and He was called Emmanuel.

Emmanuel—God with us; God in our midst. Jesus, infinitely rich in a heavenly realm, came to be Emmanuel, infinitely poor in a sin-polluted world. The Babe came to dwell among us that we might have some understanding of what God is like and know emphatically that we are loved. We are no longer alone. He is with us! We need not stumble in darkness or trust in the vain hope of our goodness. Jesus Emmanuel is with us to be our light and our salvation.

The Sacrifice at His Death

The Easter story focuses on Jesus, the Savior on a cross, who sacrifices Himself for us, then rises and ascends to His heavenly home again. His sacrifice to become the Christmas Babe is not detailed for us in Scripture. But we do know the details of His sacrifice before and on Golgotha. The humility of the towel-robed Christ in the Upper Room embarrasses us. The mockery of the scarlet-robed Christ infuriates us. The pain and shame of the crucified Christ grieves us. His death sacrifice is graphically portrayed in Scripture, and we can grasp what that cost Jesus.

Because it's much easier to gaze at the sweet Infant Jesus in the manger than at the bruised Savior Jesus on the cross, we sometimes linger at the manger too long. But the writer of Hebrews encourages us to "... fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

The sacrifice is there in the words "endured" and "shame"; but the ascension to glory is there also. In our mind's

eye we can again picture the stairway from earth to heaven. This time on the bottom step is the human Jesus. But as He ascends each step, He sheds more of the vestiges of this world. Finally, He reaches the top and in majesty assumes His seat beside the Father. The mission is complete—from the manger to the cross.

Zhu's Two Questions

In our family room at Christmas sat Zhu, a university student from China. Students from other countries were there also, busily decorating our Christmas tree. Zhu wanted a task, so I handed her a shoe box containing our manger scene. She began unwrapping and carefully examining each figure.

Later I noticed Zhu sitting beside her unique manger scene arrangement. Pointing to it, she said, "I don't understand what this is supposed to be. Tell me about it." Zhu, a bright woman on her way to a doctoral degree, had been raised in Communist China, where all religion was suppressed. She had never heard all of the Christmas story.

What a joy it was to tell the familiar story to someone hearing it for the first time! She interrupted the telling with many questions. But I will always remember the last two questions. The first was, "Why would God send His Son?" Zhu had left behind her own young daughter in China. Her tender mother's heart was touched by the sending and coming of Jesus. The answer to her question about the reason for Christmas included the Easter story, for God's Christmas love led to the cross.

Zhu's last question, asked in the direct Chinese way, was this: "Do you believe those stories?" She had come to the crux of the matter, whether one hears the Christmas/Easter story for the first time or has heard it hundreds of times. The critical issue is whether we, the listeners, believe it is true. Did Christ really enter the world and take on human flesh to die on a cross for *our* sin and to remove *our* guilt? The incarnation of God in Jesus is nothing if it is not personal. The sacrifice at the manger and the cross demand our response.

*Though Christ a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born,
If he's not born in thee
Thy soul is still forlorn.
The cross on Golgotha
Will never save thy soul,
The cross in thine own heart
Alone can make thee whole.*

— Johann Scheffler, 1624-1677 [†]

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Cover

The First Brethren Church of Williamstown, Ohio, celebrated its centennial anniversary on Sunday, September 26th. Shown in the top picture are many of the 130 people who attended the day's events. In the bottom picture, sitting next to the banner announcing the celebration, are the main speakers for the day: Dr. Fred Finks (*left*), president of Ashland Theological Seminary; and Dr. Charles Munson, professor emeritus of Ashland Theological Seminary and a former pastor of the Williamstown congregation. See page 17 for a report of the day's activities.

Photographs by Ryan Gordon.

Answers to the Little Crusader page:
Jesus is the reason for Christmas.

Dare to be Different . . . at Christmas

By Robert Keplinger

MANY "DIFFERENT" EVENTS surrounded the birth of Jesus Christ 20 centuries ago. The trip to Bethlehem, the Child in a *manger*, the appearance of the angels, the visit of the shepherds and the wise men—all were "different" from normal events and were a part of the uniqueness of that first Christmas.

We, likewise, need to incorporate something "different" in our celebration of Christmas to remind us of the unique event that took place 2,000 years ago, when God took the form of a man and was born in a stable and placed in a manger.

Community church visits

In our community, we do one of these "different" things. We have a progressive Christmas caroling event. People from the community board school buses and travel to three churches in the area to view the beauty of the church building as it is decorated for the Advent season. We have a brief service (15 minutes) in each church, conducted in accordance with the tradition of that congregation. In addition to enjoying the caroling and fellowship as we travel from church to church, we are served refreshments at the last church. This is an excellent way to get to know your neighboring churches and their pastors.

Something different that I learned about just last year pertains to the crèche or manger scene that is displayed at Christmas. According to this tradition, the Baby Jesus is not put into the manger until Holy Night, even though the scene has been on display for several weeks.

An exciting event for the families and young people in our church is



the lighting of the Advent wreath on the four Sundays before Christmas and at the Christmas program. We choose a different family to lead the brief candle-lighting service each Sunday. The older children read scripture or pray, and even the younger children sing a Christmas carol or light the Advent candle under the supervision of mother and dad. You can even have your own Advent wreath with your own family at home.

Different family traditions

I recently asked our two sons what they remembered as being "different" about our Christmas celebrations in the parsonage over the years. I was surprised when they both laughed and said that they remembered that before they opened their gifts, we had our family Christmas breakfast and devotions, thus putting things in proper perspective. "We weren't even allowed to peek at the tree and the gifts!" they remembered.

One of our daughters-in-law told

us that on Christmas Day, they take time to get a small cake, cupcake, or doughnut. They put a candle on it and light it, and the family, especially the children, sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus. This is a good way to remember the true meaning of Christmas.

Christmas tree practices

Dare to be different! Some families cut down their own Christmas tree to decorate. Other families decorate their tree using a different theme each year.

I was in a store recently and saw a Christmas tree with a glass pickle ornament on it. This is considered a special tree decoration by many families in Germany. There, the fir tree is decorated on Christmas Eve. The pickle ornament is always the last ornament to be hung on the tree, with the parents hiding it in the green boughs among the other ornaments.

When the children are allowed to view the tree on Christmas morning, they begin searching for the pickle ornament. The child who



Rev. Keplinger is pastor of the Linwood, Md., Brethren Church.

first finds this special ornament receives an extra gift for being the most observant child.

A gift for Jesus

What about giving a gift to Jesus as a "different" way of celebrating Christmas? Jesus said, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me." This gift could take many forms.

I remember when we used to surprise a family in the church by providing some physical needs for them. The Woman's Missionary Society makes up baskets of cookies and fruit to share with shut-ins. We have also made visits to nursing homes to share the Good News of Christ with the residents there. (You always need to check with the nursing home administrator to see when would be an appropriate time for your "surprise" visit.)

At the Linwood Church we have a "Mitten Tree," on which we place mittens, gloves, scarves, etc. These are then sent to Riverside Christian School at Lost Creek, Kentucky. (Other churches could share them with the needy in the community.)

The Salvation Army, local rescue missions, and other such organizations are always in need of help and contributions. One year we collected canned foods and took them to a local mission. The mission, in turn, gave us a tour of the facility and showed us how they help people. Doing something like this is especially good and "different" for children and youth.

Another exciting and sometimes cold way to observe Christmas is by having a live nativity scene at your church or in your community. This is a good way to share the true meaning of Christmas with people who pass by. "Hanging the Greens"

(decorating the church) is another way of getting ready for Christmas. And we usually also take part in the lighting of the community Christmas tree.

Don't forget about music

Music is one of the exciting traditions of Christmas. But this also can be "different" as you participate in a musical presentation, or as you simply enjoy the music of Christmas as presented by others.

Another meaningful event is the Christmas Eve service. If our church doesn't have one, then I usually find one in the community to attend. It is a wonderful way to be part of the celebration of the birth of the Christ Child.

Whether you do something big or small, do something "different" at Christmas. It can help the Christ of Christmas make a greater impact on you and your family. [†]

The Message from the Manger

By William Shipman

CHRISTMAS is special! It is an electric time of year that stirs the soul of everyone. We hum Christmas melodies, put up decorations, look forward to the reunion of family, eat more than we should, share with generous spirit, and hope for goodwill among people.

In spite of commercialization and marketing greed, the true meaning of Christmas still outshines the plastic and tinsel. The manger scene of Mary and Joseph, shepherds and wise men frame history's central figure.

The Christ Child is an invincible force. He is our Savior, Deliverer, Redeemer, Emancipator, Liberator, Messiah, Lord, and King. In Him and through Him God invaded our world with flesh and blood. The Creator of the universe came down and lived among human beings.

Rev. Shipman is pastor of the Ardmore First Brethren Church of South Bend, Indiana. This article first appeared in the Ardmore Church newsletter.

This Child was and is all that we should be. He is the standard by which we are all measured. He is humanity at its best and the divine explained in human language.

The world screams its anger at this Child. They wanted to abort Him, but they crucified Him instead. They pursued every means to silence the message from the manger. But this Child is indestructible. He is Lord of the Universe. He is the Lord of you and me.

In the face of hatred and anger, He offers love and forgiveness. When we are confronted by death, He gives life. When we are challenged by despair, He provides hope. To a faithless world, He is the Truth.

What is so unsettling about a manger scene? Why do unbelieving men and women rage against it? There at the manger, looking at that Child, one stares into the very face of God.

This Christmas, tell someone what the manger means to you. Pass on the promise. [†]



Reflections on Twenty Years of Ministry

William R. Skeldon looks back over his restoration to pastoral ministry and the 20 years of service at the Oak Hill First Brethren Church that followed.

Pastor and Mrs. William R. Skeldon were honored on Sunday, September 5, 1993, by the Oak Hill, West Virginia, First Brethren Church for their 20 years of service to that congregation. In preparation for that occasion, Rev. Skeldon was asked to write down his thoughts on his ministry at Oak Hill. These reflections were then read by Deacon Paul Fox during the recognition service. The following is an edited version of what Rev. Skeldon wrote.

ON SUNDAY evening, September 9, 1973, the members of the First Brethren Church of Oak Hill, West Virginia, voted to extend me a call to serve as their pastor. For our part, my wife Gene and I had made our decision to accept a call to Oak Hill six days earlier, on Labor Day, September 3, 1973.

At that time I had been away from the pastoral ministry for nearly three years, following a personal crisis during an earlier pastorate. Just two months before accepting the call to the Oak Hill Church, we had moved to Ocala, Florida, where we intended to make our home. But I had the nagging feeling that the Lord wanted me back in the pastorate.

Putting out the fleece

In late August I decided to "put out the fleece," so I wrote to Rev. Virgil Ingraham, who was at that time General Secretary of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church, and to Rev. Smith Rose, who was then serving as Executive Secretary for The Brethren Church. I told them how I felt about returning to the ministry and asked if they thought there might be a place for me in a Brethren congregation.

Rev. Ingraham responded promptly by letter, in which he offered me his encouragement. Shortly thereafter, Rev. Rose contacted me by phone. He told me that the Oak

Hill Church was open and recommended the congregation as a good place to serve, having served there himself 20 years earlier. He also said that he thought the Oak Hill Brethren would be favorable to accepting me to serve as their pastor.

Now it was decision time on our part. The answer did not come easily. Gene and I really did want to know the will of God in this matter, so I asked Rev. Rose for a few days to pray about it.

An agonizing time

Gene and I talked and prayed, but we seemed to get nowhere. It was a very difficult and agonizing time. There seemed to be so many pros and cons, and we were sensing no clear direction from above. Finally, I phoned Smith Rose and told him that the church should not consider me as a candidate. We simply had not received any answer from the Lord, and we would not make the move on our own. That was that, we thought!

We spent Labor Day at Daytona Beach, one of our favorite places. But it brought us little pleasure that day. As we sat watching the ocean, usually a source of delight, I was possessed by a spirit of gloom and depression, induced I believed by God, because we had somehow mistaken His guidance. Both Gene and I felt very strongly that we should have said yes to Oak Hill's invitation to meet with them.

That evening, after returning from the beach, I phoned Smith Rose in Ashland and told him that we had missed the Lord's direction. I asked if possibly the door might still be open. He said that he thought it still was, and he contacted Layton Pegram in Oak Hill to inform him of our decision.

Arrangements were made for me to go to Oak Hill the following week-

end. Gene would remain in Florida with our sons, John and Matthew. If the church decided to call me, they would have to accept my family sight unseen.

When I left Ocala, I put everything I could possibly carry into the Volkswagon I was driving. I'm still not sure whether it was faith or presumption on our part, but I went with a full car as though I intended to stay! I did so because I knew that if the church did extend a call, it would take both the Volkswagon and the Plymouth station wagon full to get everything to West Virginia.

I arrived in Oak Hill on Friday, September 7, and checked into the Chuck Wagon Motel. There I met Smith and Florence Rose, who had come to Oak Hill to serve as "introducers and encouragers."

We met with the congregation that evening for a get-acquainted session. On Saturday, Layton Pegram gave me a tour of the Oak Hill area. Then on Sunday, I taught Sunday school and preached in both the morning and evening services.

A joyful climax

The climax of events came following the evening service. While the congregation made its decision concerning issuing me a call, it was suggested that I await the outcome at the Chuck Wagon Motel. The decision wasn't very long in coming. Layton came to the motel and announced that the church had voted to extend me a one-year call. I can still remember the relief, the joy, and the sense of God's presence I experienced when he told me of the church's decision.

I contacted Gene immediately, and we made plans for her and the boys to come from Florida the following weekend, arriving on Sunday, September 16. For me it was to be a very busy week. All of our furniture

was in Indiana. The church agreed to give me a moving allowance rather than hire movers. This was really helpful for both of us—it saved the church a little money and it actually put a little money in our pockets.

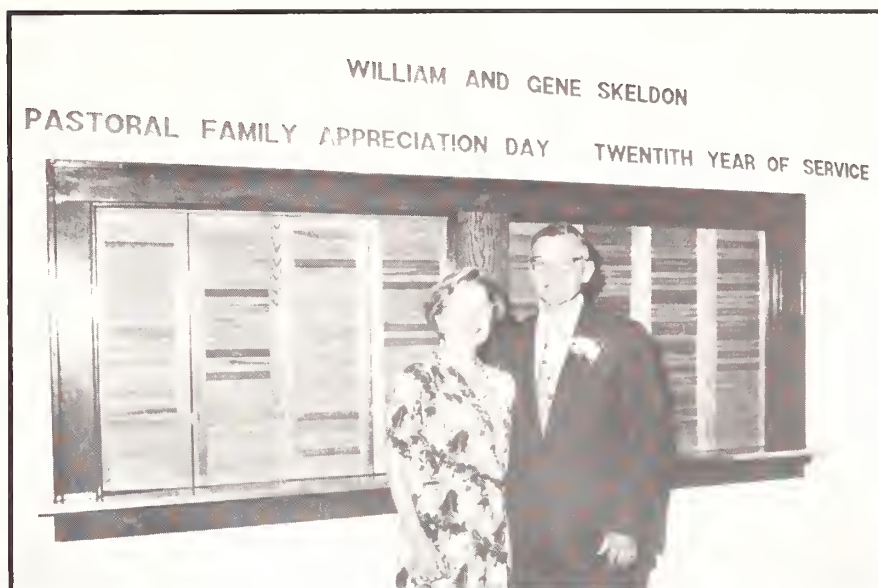
I rented a U-Haul the next morning and drove to Indiana. I spent Tuesday loading furniture and on Wednesday was back in Oak Hill, where people from the church helped me unload. I even made it to the church Wednesday night, although a young man from Appalachian Bible College conducted the service.

Gene, John, and Matthew arrived according to schedule on Sunday afternoon (Sept. 16), in time for the evening service. Following the service, the congregation held a reception for us, during which they presented us some much-appreciated welcoming gifts.

A year passed, and the church ex-

Rev. Bill and Gene Skeldon are honored for their twenty years of service to the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church.

Photo by Kenneth Nuckels.



tended me a three-year pastoral call. At the end of those three years, Dorsey Brown made a motion in a business meeting to extend me a 20-year call. This was heretofore unheard of, and few, if any, took it seriously. But as things have worked out, it is altogether possible that I will complete those 20 years (four more years). We have already served the Oak Hill Church longer than any two former pastors combined.

An eventful 20 years

Much has happened during the 20 years we have already been at Oak Hill. The congregation/pastor relationship has been as harmonious as one could hope for, with disagreements and conflicts at a minimum. For Gene and me, it has certainly been a happy time!

During our 20 years of service here, we have seen the church move in cycles, which is probably the pattern for most churches. For example, the first year we were on the field, Sunday morning attendance averaged 85. The highest attendances were in 1979, 1980, and 1981, when we averaged 107. The lowest attendances were in 1989, with an average of 68. Last year's average was 92, and this year so far it stands at 95.

The statistics on giving are interesting. In 1974, total giving for the year was \$18,416 toward a budget of just \$14,820. Last year (1992) the budget was \$40,768 and the total amount given was \$45,265, plus moneys given toward special projects such as faith promise for missions and world relief.

Following are other statistics some might find interesting. In my 20 years at Oak Hill, I have:

- preached 2,868 sermons;
- taught more than that number of Sunday school classes and mid-week services;
- dedicated 59 children to the Lord;
- conducted 119 funerals;
- officiated at 62 weddings;
- baptized 152 individuals;
- received 186 into the membership of the church;
- served for 18 years as pastor of the Gatewood Brethren Church.

SOME MIGHT ASK, "Where do we go from here?" The Lord willing, we will be pleased to remain here until . . . until Jesus comes or until I am no longer able to carry on the work or until I am called home to glory. Only the Lord really knows!

One thing Gene and I feel very strongly about, and that is that we are truly thankful to God and to the Oak Hill Brethren for the opportunity we have had to serve as pastoral family.

As pastor I have often made the boast that the Oak Hill Brethren Church is the best church in the entire denomination. These are not idle words, but the true feelings of one who has been around long enough to know!

As I complete 20 years at Oak Hill, my thoughts often return to Daytona Beach, Labor Day, 1973. What would it have meant for us if we had stayed with our original decision? And what would it have meant for the First Brethren Church of Oak Hill?

[†]

A Special Day

Sunday, September 5, was "Pastoral Family Appreciation Day" at the Oak Hill, W. Va., First Brethren Church, honoring Rev. and Mrs. William Skeldon for their 20 years of service to the church. Rev. Skeldon was given the day off for the occasion, and Deacon Paul Fox led the worship service and Rev. Carl Gray gave the message.

At the beginning of the service, Pastor Skeldon was presented a boutonniere and his wife, Gene, was given a corsage. Making the presentation was June Allen, a longtime faithful member and deaconess at Oak Hill.

A carry-in dinner was held after the morning worship service, followed by a reception in honor of the Skeldons. A money tree and a number of cards and letters of appreciation were given to the Skeldons during the reception.

The Appreciation Day concluded with an evening service featuring music by the singing group "Pure Heart."

Pastor Skeldon was born on Christmas Day, 1929, in Toledo, Ohio. Gene was born in Dunbar, W. Va., but grew up in Fairmount, Ind. They were married September 15, 1950. They have three sons (Mark, John, and Matthew) and three grandchildren. Rev. Skeldon was ordained in 1963 while serving the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church.

"The Oak Hill congregation deeply appreciates these dear people," wrote Oak Hill Church reporter Rosseta Rogusky, "and [we] truly hope they will be here another 20 years."

A Worthy Cause
123 Help St.
Compassion, CA 98761

Take advantage
of this month's
special offer!

Mrs. Chantel Logan
Rt. A, Box BCD
Aquapass, VA 23456

A Worthy Cause
123 Help St.
Compassion, CA 98761

Urgent!
Open
Immediately!

Mrs. Chantel Logan
Rt. A, Box BCD
Aquapass, VA 23456

Is There Such a Thing As Christian Fund-Raising?

By Chantal Logan

A Worthy Cause
123 Help St.
Compassion, CA 98761

Your Help Is
Needed Now!

Mrs. Chantel Logan
Rt. A, Box BCD
Aquapass, VA 23456

SOME TIME AGO I made the mistake of giving some money to a Christian organization. Yes, I said, "I made a mistake." It *was* a mistake because ever since that day, I have been flooded with mail pressuring me to give more. "**Urgent!**" the letters say. "**Open immediately!**" "**Your help is needed now!**"

When I open the letters, I even find checks already made out to the organization with my name printed at the bottom. A big arrow indicates where I am to sign!

In other letters, the sponsors try to appeal to the bargain-hunter in me. They make me an offer no one could resist. It goes something like this: "For ONLY \$29.99 a month, you can be the proud owner of a Third-World child! Take your pick. You can choose the color, sex, age, and country of origin of your child. And think about the benefits! You will receive hours of Christian enjoyment writing letters to *your* child and from learning what *your* money is doing. . . !" I'm bracing myself for the next mailing, which will probably say, "Sale! Pay for one child and get a second child free!"

Fortunately for me, they still have not figured out how to spell my name. So I can pretend I am somebody else and let whoever Chantel Logan might be go on a guilt trip for the death of a thousand children because she didn't sign on the dotted line.

The values of Madison Avenue

But isn't it a shame that Christian organizations stoop this low to get money for their programs? Do they have to adopt the philosophy

and the moral standards of the advertising industry to get people to give? Shouldn't Christian fund-raising reflect the values of the gospel rather than those of Madison Avenue? Or should we just accept these practices as another case of the end justifying the means?

Every day we are bombarded by an array of advertisements whose purpose is to entice us to spend our money on new products or on old ones that supposedly are "new and improved." Since millions of dollars are spent to produce these commercials and millions more are gained or lost according to the success or failure of these commercials, many companies are willing to use any means, no matter how questionable, in order to persuade people to buy.

Masterpieces of seduction

Most commercials are masterpieces of seduction. They are cleverly crafted in order to manipulate our feelings in an effort to control our behavior. The psychologists who are at the service of the advertising world struck gold when they discovered the heart of our sinful nature—that our desire for self-gratification, whether it be sexual, physical, or psychological, is the motivation behind most of our actions. Advertisers spend all of their efforts appealing to those desires, and in the process they have made a virtue of selfishness and of self-indulgence. And since guilt is also a powerful motivation, they have come up with a whole line of "you-owe-it-to-yourself" slogans to validate their message and thus dispel any possible feelings of guilt.

Unfortunately, the Christian community has been contaminated by secular advertising. Although not as obvious or as crude, Christian advertising often uses the same

manipulative gimmicks as the secular agencies to get us to give our money. Instead of appealing to true Christian values (self-sacrifice) or authentic feelings (of unselfish love), it pulls the string of cheap compassion, overworked guilt, and self-seeking righteousness.

Some pictures of the poor, the hungry, and the disabled are dehumanizing. They feed on our morbid and insatiable curiosity for the tragic and the grotesque.

We are asked to be generous, but we are asked to do so for selfish reasons. These reasons range from feeling good about ourselves at one extreme to receiving eternal rewards at the other extreme, with the offer of a certificate we can frame and hang on our wall falling somewhere in between. Or we are promised that, depending on the amount of our donation, our names will be published in a special book or else placed on a plaque on the wall of a building.

What about Christ's teaching?

But what about Christ's teaching about the right hand not knowing what the left hand is doing? This teaching is not only overlooked, it is even contradicted. And what about the story of the widow's mite? Is it only a nice story to tell Sunday school children, which is not meant to be taken into account in real life fund-raising strategies?

We would do well to remember that it was the fund-raising methods of the papacy and not any lengthy treatise on theology about grace and salvation that motivated the Protestant Reformation. Actually, some of the advertisements for annuity programs bear an uncanny resemblance to the indulgences issued at that time by the pope; they come very close to promising eternal sal-

Mrs. Logan is a member of the Bethlehem Brethren Church near Harrisonburg, Virginia, and a former Brethren missionary.

vation thanks to the use of ambiguous phrases with both religious and financial overtones—such phrases as “secure your future” and “get many returns in heaven.” Luther attacked the fund-raising methods of his time because they were an expression of the true theology of his day, not the theology written about in books or even preached from pulpits, but the theology that was lived.

Looking at it from this angle, our theology is based more on the philosophy of Madison Avenue than on the teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. When it comes to money, we don’t look at the Bible for our guidelines; we look instead to the moneymakers, thinking that our good cause somehow absolves us for adopting the worldly values hidden behind their methods.

Some Christians have even come to believe that when we deal with the business of the church, faith should be set aside and financial realities should be our first consideration. We hear again and again that the bottom line is not faithful obedience but money. And when money comes up short, we hire a fund-raiser instead of first getting on our knees or preaching a gospel of sacrificial giving.

The question, then, is which gos-

pel are we preaching? After more than a decade of the prosperity gospel, we are in need of our own reformation—a reformation in our attitudes, in our thinking, and in our use of money and possessions. Perhaps the evangelical community has not given in to a culture that approves of homosexuality and abortion, but it has capitulated to a culture that bows to the god Mammon and that puts its trust not in the God whose name is inscribed on the coin but in the coin itself.

Giving is to be a way of life

Christians today need to rediscover that contrary to what the culture around us says, we don’t own nor deserve anything we have, not our houses nor our cars nor the clothes we have on our backs. Everything we have belongs to God. Giving is not a heroic act of charity or virtue, but a repaying and sharing of what has only been entrusted to us. Like witnessing and forgiving, giving is not an option for Christians but a way of life. And giving is not limited to money; it involves all of life.

Christian fund-raisers and financial advisors also need to be reminded that money of itself is powerless and useless. Money cannot convert

people or transform lives. Nor can it love the hungry, the sick, or the imprisoned. Given to the poor in a condescending manner, it causes resentment. And money in abundance causes division and leads to corruption both inside and outside the church.

Jesus is Lord, and money or no money, He will bring about the extension of His kingdom. There is no need to stretch the truth, to deceive, to use pressure tactics, or to resort to questionable methods. God will honor the request of those who act with honesty and integrity, and He will bless and multiply the little or the much they raise.

Some might think that it is too simplistic or old-fashioned to trust God and affirm His lordship over questions of cold, hard cash. But if we trust Him for our eternal salvation in the world to come, why can’t we trust Him for our finances in the world today? If we keep on trusting the dollar sign and the wizards of Madison Avenue to conduct God’s business on earth, when Christ returns He may find churches and Christian organizations with full treasuries, balanced budgets, and impressive balance sheets. But will He find faith on earth (Luke 18:8.)? [†]

Giving by Faith

By Charlie Allgood

I USED TO BE A PERSON who didn’t give anything back to God. I worked hard for my money, and it took every cent we made to live. Why, if I would have given ten percent of my money to God, I would not have had money to go to ball games or to buy that new CD, fishing pole, or pizza. And I love pizza! So God would just have to understand. I prayed to Him and believed in Him. Wasn’t that enough?

Then the Lord saved me, and I started to read my Bible and seek God’s will for my life. I found out

that the Lord expects ten percent of our earnings and that He wants us to keep 90 percent to live on and with which to pay our bills. I wanted to do what pleases God, but we needed that money.

Well, we decided to believe in God’s word, and by **faith** we started to give our tithes. Life was different and a little tight for the first few weeks. But then we began to notice that we had just as much extra money after bills as we did before we gave our tithes. So we started to look back at our receipts and our checkbook to find out why. We found that our cars were in the shop much less often; none of us had been sick and needed a doctor; and our lives just had less turmoil in them. These were the things we never had control over before and

which we couldn’t change ourselves. Only God could. And He did!

These things weren’t the reason we gave our tithes. They were just the result. And I’m not saying that if you give your tithes, the same things will happen to you. But I do know that when we obey God’s word, He is pleased with us. And come to think of it, that’s enough for me.

I wanted to share this with you because I thought there might be someone else who feels the way I used to feel. I would like to encourage you to step out in faith and believe that God will meet your needs.

So if you would not only like to obey God but receive a blessing doing it, please give your tithes. Both **you** and your **church** will benefit from it. [†]

Mr. Allgood is a new member of the Mt. Olive Brethren Church, Pineville, Va. He wrote this article for the church newsletter, and his pastor, Rev. Fred Miller, was so impressed that he submitted a copy to the EVANGELIST editor.



Understanding the Bible

DO YOU WANT to dream the impossible dream? Try imagining The Brethren Church without the Bible. This denomination is so focused on the Christian Scriptures that its founders took as their motto, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible."

The Brethren Church has always been a Bible-teaching, Bible believing fellowship of Christians. But what is the purpose of this book? Why do we consider it so important?

We can answer these questions from three angles: doctrine, duty, and doxology. That is, the word of God shows us what to believe, how to behave, and whom to worship.

Now right away we must note something very important as to how Brethren understand Christianity: these are not three separate, divisible acts. Just as the Holy Trinity is one God in three persons, so Christian doctrine, duty, and doxology are a single organic life in three different activities. The whole is one reality called the love of God or life in Christ.

What to Believe

Brethren have always maintained that it is from the Bible, and only the Bible, that we learn what Christians believe. The 1993 statement *How Brethren Understand God's Word* contains these lines: "We attempt to read Scripture with both mind and heart. In order to understand the Bible, we study it dil-

Dr. Flora, professor of New Testament theology at Ashland Theological Seminary, is a member of The Brethren Church's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication, which is preparing this series of articles on "Understanding the Bible."

What's The Bible For?

By Jerry R. Flora

igently, using our renewed minds under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We seek to find the plain sense of Scripture, the meaning that the original writers, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, intended to convey."

We try to learn what the Bible's writers meant in their day in order to discern the meaning for our day. Once we have discovered that, we are obligated to adhere to it. That is what we are to believe. This belief, this doctrine, includes such truths as these: There is one God, the creator of all that is; God has communicated with the human race in general, and with and through the nation of Israel in particular; the purpose of this is to form a people from all nations for God's pleasure, a people resembling God's own character.

Such doctrinal belief focuses upon Jesus Christ as the living Word of God from all eternity. It calls for a personal relationship with this ultimate person of all history, who is living and ruling today.

"What to believe" is thus more than isolated principles or interlocking propositions. Although doctrine is the subject matter of the first part of most of Paul's letters, what does he mean by doctrine? It is clear that he loves Jesus Christ passionately. Thus, for the apostle, what to be-

lieve involves both scriptural truth and subjective attachment. It is life in the risen Christ, with all the personal commitment that this implies.

This is a challenge for the whole person—heart, soul, strength, and mind (Luke 10:27). Doctrine ascertains God's written word in the interest of allegiance to the living Word. The Bible exists for the purpose of showing us what to believe.

How to Behave

The second part of most of Paul's letters takes up matters of Christian duty. What to believe always implies how to behave. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, challenging the Christians in Nazi Germany, put it this way: "... only those who believe are obedient, and only those who are obedient believe."

The founder of the Brethren movement, Alexander Mack, felt the same way. He wrote. "To appeal to Scripture and to believe in Scripture are two vastly different things. ... Therefore, a faithful child of God looks only to [the] heavenly Father, and believes and follows Him in His revealed Word" (*Complete Writings*, 1991, pp. 81-82). For Mack, as for Bonhoeffer, what we believe and how we behave must coincide or neither is true.

This is because of the organic connection between thinking and acting as the Bible sees it. To say one thing and do another is to be either ignorant or hypocritical. Both the Hebrew prophets and our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles say this. Right belief calls for righteous behavior. Doctrine always leads to duty. Love means opening heart and hand. Jesus is Lord not just of lips, but of all of life.

The 1993 statement *How Brethren Understand God's Word* notes

Correspondence Welcomed

The members of the General Conference Executive Council's Committee on Doctrine, Research, and Publication invite readers to suggest topics or Bible passages to discuss in future articles in this column. Send questions, comments, or suggestions to the committee in care of THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST, 524 College Ave., Ashland, OH 44805.

this repeatedly. After it speaks of studying the Bible diligently, it goes on to say, "Brethren have always taken a very practical approach to Scripture, reading it to find God's will and obey it. Bible reading, like all other aspects of the Christian life, should lead to discipleship."

Coming to Christ, being saved, giving our hearts to the Lord—all this is what Jesus called being reborn (John 3:1-15). But it is only birth. What of the life that has begun? The Bible calls us to discipleship and gives us models of it. The prime example is how Jesus mentored the apostles after He summoned them to follow Him. In discipleship we learn more of God's grace and respond in grateful obedience. Year after year we discover how what we believe about Christ determines how to behave in and for Him.

This is why James insists on works as evidence of faith (James 2:14-26). This is why John exhorts whoever loves God to love the family of God also (1 John 4:7-21). This is why Paul challenges believers to lead earthly lives worthy of their heavenly calling (Eph. 4:1).

From start to finish the Bible calls for the people of God to behave like the God they believe in. We are expected to walk out in daily living

the results of our salvation. The Bible exists for the purpose of showing us how to behave.

Whom to Worship

Doctrine and duty by no means exhaust what life is all about. There is also doxology—and it ranks equally with the other two. The Bible is more than a textbook of doctrine or a manual of ethics. It is, perhaps above all, an anthology of worship. It is written out of worship and calls us to grateful adoration of the gracious God in whom we believe. It teaches, models, and summons us to worship.

The Bible is the Book of Common Prayer for the human race. Its pages reflect worship in all the activities of our life together: birth, family experience, daily work, sunset years, and death. It portrays ordinary people leading ordinary lives and giving themselves to the God of ordinary time.

Its books celebrate the grandeur of creation while they anticipate the drama of consummation. Its pages wrestle with the meaning of suffering but never lose the mystery of God's sovereignty. It recounts faith's heroines and heroes without suppressing their human foibles. And pulsing through all of it is the

reality of who we are, for to be human is to worship.

As surely as we are *homo sapiens*, thinking humanity, so we are also *homo orans*, praying humanity. From the conversation in Eden to the choruses in Revelation, the word of God echoes with prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. It reports lives formed and transformed, suggesting how that can happen for us, too. While describing a kaleidoscope of ways to worship, it discloses only One who deserves our worship. The purpose of the Bible is to show us, directly and indirectly, whom to worship.

When doctrine, duty, and doxology coincide under the guidance of the word of God, then our existence is complete. The reality is so large, so all-encompassing, so whole and holy that we have few words for it. Life is one, and Love is another. The Bible is the book of love, the love of God that gives birth to life and makes all of life worthwhile.

Jesus is the eternal Word of that love come to earth in human form as revealed to us in Scripture. In the worship of Him, we are transformed into the likeness of the God we serve. "O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!" [†]

The Uniqueness of the Virgin Birth

By John F. MacArthur, Jr.

IN JULY 1978, a little girl named Louise Brown was born in England. At 5 pounds 12 ounces, Louise was a tiny baby, but what made her birth truly extraordinary was that she was conceived outside the human body. Little Louise Brown was the first "test-tube baby."

Since then, many other children have been conceived by *in vitro* fertilization. It is amazing—unthinkable just a few years ago—but it is not miraculous. Conception occurs by a male seed fertilizing a female egg. Birth occurs normally. The only difference is the place of conception.

Scientists are experimenting with other amazing techniques to enable conception and birth by other than natural means. For example, sperm and eggs may now be frozen and thawed to conceive an *in vitro* fetus, even after years of dormancy. For years scientists have experimented with *parthenogenesis*. The name comes from two Greek words,

parthenos, meaning "virgin," and *genesis*, meaning "beginning" or "birth." Literally, then, parthenogenesis is the science of virgin birth. Laboratory experiments have revealed that in some cases parthenogenetic life can be generated in some animals. Among honeybees, for example, the unfertilized eggs develop naturally into drones. Artificial parthenogenesis has been used to produce silkworms since 1888. Many forms of invertebrates and plants may be reproduced by parthenogenesis in laboratory experiments.

But parthenogenesis can reproduce only genetically identical species. Frog eggs, for example, might be stimulated to develop by parthenogenesis into living frogs, but all of them will be female frogs genetically identical to the mother who laid the eggs. Also, parthenogenesis, cloning, and other experimental forms of reproduction have all proved impossible on the human level.

Even in the face of modern science, Christ's conception remains unique. Science can never explain how a virgin, a woman who had never had a sexual relationship with a man, could give birth to a male child. It was a miracle of God, the greatest miracle of conception the world has ever known. [†]

Rev. MacArthur is pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif. This article is from his book, The Miracle of Christmas (Zondervan Publishing House, 1989, 1993), and is used here by permission of the publisher.

What Brethren Believe About Evangelism and Outreach

Ronald W. Waters presents results of an "Evangelism Church Survey" of Brethren attitudes, opinions, and behaviors on these important subjects.

THE WORDS "GO YE" from the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 appear in a heart in the center of The Brethren Church seal. Sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ has been at the center of the life of Brethren churches as well . . . or at least we have given evangelism a great deal of lip service.

Looking at declines in membership over the last several decades, however, has called into question how highly we value evangelism and outreach. A recent "Evangelism Church Survey" was conducted to find out what we really believe about evangelism and what we are doing about what we believe.

Attitudes

Survey participants were given 25 statements about themselves and their churches related to evangelism and outreach. For each question participants indicated whether they agreed strongly, agreed somewhat, were undecided, disagreed somewhat, or disagreed strongly. Responses reported in this article are the number who answered "agree strongly" unless noted otherwise.

The questions were designed to examine attitudes and opinions in four categories: (1) reaching out in word and deed, (2) inviting and welcoming new people, (3) including and involving new people, and (4) growing in Christian discipleship.

Of these, the category receiving the highest average scores for agreement was **growing in Christian discipleship**. More than half (54%) said "my faith affects my daily life at home or work in a positive way." Three other questions reflected opinions about their local churches. Thirty-one percent said that "people care for one another in a way that is more compassionate than

what I have experienced in other groups" and 29 percent agreed that "my experiences at church are in touch with the realities of everyday life." Further, 27 percent said that "people speak about experiences of God's continuing action and presence."

The next highest category in average scores was **inviting and welcoming new people**. Participants were very positive about their pastor as a model for outreach, with 57 percent saying "our pastor is a good example in leading people to faith in Jesus Christ." About their churches, 31 percent said "people go out of their way to be friendly to strangers and newcomers." But only six percent thought that "visitors are visited by someone from the church within 48 hours."

Church growth studies show that persons contacted by telephone and/or a personal visit by a lay person are much more likely to return than those who receive no personal contact from the church after they attend the first time. This clearly indicates opportunity to improve our follow-up techniques.

"Responses reported in this article are the number who answered 'agree strongly' unless noted otherwise."

On a personal note, 40 percent said they "can think of at least five people who do not attend any church regularly" with whom they have a friendly relationship. These natural relationships provide opportunities to build bridges to people who do not know Christ or who are not regularly attending a church. Studies by Win Arn and others have shown that an overwhelming number of people (75-90%) began attending their present church because of the invitation of a relative or friend!

The next highest category was in-

cluding and involving new people—the basic process of assimilating new people into the life of the church. Regarding the attitudes of their churches, only seven percent strongly agreed that "there are cliques or exclusive groups which make one feel unwelcome" (25 percent strongly disagreed, indicating they do not think such groups exist in their churches), while only three percent said, "I'd have to say I don't feel accepted in this church" (66 percent strongly disagreed, indicating they do feel accepted).

Other pro-active actions by their churches were not rated as highly as are typical for churches that effectively reach new people for Jesus Christ and incorporate them into the church. Less than one-fourth (23%) felt their church makes "a conscious effort to get new believers involved in a Sunday school class, Bible study, or spiritual growth group."

Getting people involved

Studies have shown that starting new groups in the church is one of the most effective ways to reach more people. Yet, only 16 percent said "we regularly start new Sunday School classes and/or other groups." New people like to be engaged in meaningful tasks in which they feel equipped to participate. But only 14 percent said that their churches make "a conscious effort to give new members meaningful roles or tasks based on their spiritual gifts and interests."

Churches that are effective in incorporating new people generally have as members of their church board at least one in five who have been part of the church for two years or less. But only 11 percent of Brethren people said that their church board included *anyone* who had been "members of the congregation for two years or less."

The lowest average scores were recorded for statements about **reaching**

Rev. Waters is Director of Brethren Church Ministries.

"Only 18 percent said that 'reaching out to the unchurched is a high priority for our church' and only 13 percent said that people in their churches 'are open to new experiences and ideas.'"

out in word and deed. Only 18 percent said that "reaching out to the unchurched is a high priority for our church" and only 13 percent said that people in their churches "are open to new experiences and ideas." Only one in ten agreed that "getting to know non-Christians is one of my priorities in life."

On the positive side, only one percent said that "evangelism is pushed entirely too much in our church" (with 39 percent strongly disagreeing, indicating it is not pushed too much). Also, 38 percent said that "meeting the physical

needs of people in the community is sometimes just as important as meeting their spiritual needs." People are most open to the gospel and to an invitation to a warm, friendly, supportive church during times of physical and emotional stress in their lives, so this attitude is encouraging for outreach potential.

Churches effectively reaching the lost free their pastor from the role of a chaplain (primarily caring for the members of the congregation) and for the role of outreach to those outside the church. The 23 percent agreement that "our pastor should spend as much time in ministry to unchurched people as to people in our church" is encouraging, but it also shows a need to teach our congregations of the need to liberate their pastors for outreach.

More than two-thirds (69%) strongly or somewhat agreed that "building the quality of the spiritual lives of people in the church is more important than seeing the church grow in numbers" while only 13 percent strongly or somewhat disagreed. Churches that desire to reach a growing number of people for salvation in Christ should strive for a more balanced attitude between "quality" and "quantity." The most effective churches in outreach would have a greater tendency of disagreeing with this statement.

Over half (56%) strongly or somewhat agreed that "meeting the needs of our own members is our main concern," while only 20 percent strongly or somewhat disagreed. Emphasis on "our own members" will generally result in an ingrown church that will have little desire for reaching the lost.

Confidence

Five statements were presented to assess levels of confidence in specific aspects of personal assurance of salvation, faith sharing, and discipling others. Participants ranked their responses on a nine-point scale, ranging from "not very confident" to "very confident." Percentages below reflect those



who answered one of the two highest choices (highest quadrant) on the "very confident" end of the scale.

Three out of four (76%) indicated high confidence that "I have had a personal experience with Christ's salvation and believe myself to be truly saved" (only two percent in lowest quadrant). An even higher number (81%) were very confident that "I can identify one or two ways that knowing Jesus Christ specifically and positively affects my life" (one percent in lowest quadrant). Such attitudes are vital for effective witnessing. If the gospel is not good news for us, we won't be able to commend it as good news for others.

Levels of confidence diminish for statements related to witnessing, yet the percentages are somewhat encouraging. Less than half (45%) indicated a high level of confidence that "I could tell in one to two minutes how I decided to accept Christ, in language that an unbeliever could understand." But an additional 28 percent responded in the next highest quadrant, indicating they are somewhat confident. This is the kind of information and approach that would be useful in giving a personal testimony to faith in Christ.

About one-third (31%) felt very confident that they could personally "lead a person through the steps to becoming a Christian." An additional 29 percent

About the Survey

The "Evangelism Church Survey" was conducted by The Brethren Church National Office in Brethren churches during the summer and fall of 1993. One of the purposes of this survey was to discover the attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of Brethren people regarding evangelism and outreach.

Pastors were asked to administer the survey to their congregations during a Sunday morning worship service to reach the greatest number of people possible. An alternative of surveying members of adult Sunday school classes was used in some congregations.

Over half (56%) of all Brethren churches participated. The total number of surveys received and tabulated was 2,677, which is equivalent to nearly one-fourth of all people attending a Brethren church on a typical Sunday morning.

Each church that conducted the survey received a printout of the responses for that congregation, along with a form to guide church leadership through a detailed analysis of the results.

Because of the large percentage of response, this survey gives us a comprehensive look at Brethren thought on evangelism and outreach.

We offer a special word of thanks to all who participated and particularly to the pastors who conducted the study.

Brethren Church Ministries

"While the study reflects many positive attitudes about evangelism and outreach, large numbers do not hold those attitudes strongly. Churches would do well to enter into a prolonged evangelism and outreach emphasis."

responded in the next highest quadrant as somewhat confident. Though ideally we might hope that *every* Christian could tell another how to find Christ, these percentages show a far greater number of Brethren who feel confident in this aspect than I had expected.

The lowest levels of confidence related to ability to "help a new believer get a good start in living the Christian life," with only 29 percent in the highest quadrant. Yet, an additional 33 percent responded favorably in the next highest quadrant as somewhat confident.

Behaviors

Positive attitudes about evangelism should result in specific behaviors related to outreach. What did we find in our study?

Nearly one-third (32%) strongly agreed that they "have experienced opportunities presented by the Holy Spirit to share my faith with another." Unfortunately, the responses do not tell us clearly whether or not the respondents have taken advantage of those opportunities.

As noted earlier, 40 percent said they "can think of at least five people who do not attend any church regularly" with whom they have a friendly relationship. Only 19 percent, however, strongly agreed that "I pray regularly by name for three or more people who need to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord." Our churches would do well to foster greater levels of prayer for the lost.

Also, only 16 percent strongly agreed that "at church, I take the initiative to talk with those I do not know well." Congregations who desire to win the lost and gather them into the church will discover ways to help their members take a more open approach to new people.

What about inviting unchurched persons to Christ or to their own church? Nearly half had invited someone during the previous month, with 44 percent inviting 1-5 persons and five percent inviting more than five. Looking at a longer time frame (the past six

months), nearly two-thirds (63%) had invited one or more persons. Studies by George Barna and George Gallup have shown that anywhere from one-fourth to three-fourths of all unchurched people in the United States are open to an invitation to a church! If we accept even the lowest level of openness, there are hundreds of persons in our communities just waiting for us to invite them to our church . . . and to faith in Jesus Christ as saving Lord.

Evaluation of the Results

So, what do we know? The findings from this important study need further examination and assessment. But here are some initial reflections:

1. We have a generally high impression that our churches are in touch with the realities of life. Local churches should ask new members and recent "drop-outs" to describe their images of the churches, to see if their thoughts match those already active in the congregation.

2. We must be more intentional about freeing pastors from "chaplain duties" to church members, thus freeing them for greater involvement in outreach ministries. Such a move will require considerable effort to retrain the congregation. Some persons (such as deacons and others) could care for the pastoral needs of members of the congregation if properly trained. Many members of the congregation will need to be lovingly trained to receive ministry from lay persons as well as from the pastor. And pastors will have to be open to a redirection of ministry—from the comfortable tasks of serving the familiar people of our churches to less comfortable contacts with a world full of desperately needy people who have yet to find hope in Jesus Christ. Certainly pastors should not be expected to do all the evangelism, but they must effectively model outreach if members of their congregations are to catch a vision for the lost.

3. Churches interested in being faithful to Christ's Great Commission will

learn and implement some very practical approaches to inviting, welcoming, and including new people. These may include visitor follow-up ministries; regular "welcome classes" for new attendees and prospective members; starting new groups (especially adult Sunday school classes and multiple worship services); and training and deploying more people in ministries consistent with their spiritual gifts (rather than letting them get bogged down in bureaucratic committee work).

4. While the study reflects many positive attitudes about evangelism and outreach, large numbers do not hold those attitudes strongly. Churches would do well to enter into a prolonged evangelism and outreach emphasis. Attitudes about outreach change slowly over an extended period of time. Passing On the Promise offers that opportunity for churches already participating. Congregations not in POfP are encouraged to enter into a similar process to foster eyes that see that "the fields are white unto harvest."

5. Brethren people show relatively high levels of confidence in their ability to share their personal testimonies and the steps to becoming a Christian. Most would find their confidence enhanced and informed by specific training in preparing their testimony and in sharing their faith. The *Living Proof* video curriculum (available from The Brethren Church National Office) is an excellent resource for this purpose. POfP churches will be using this curriculum in the spring of 1994. Non-POfP churches are encouraged to use it as well.

6. Our people are open to inviting others to church, and many are already doing so. Because the Gallup and Barna studies reveal a great deal of openness among the unchurched in our country, we should do more to enable our people to offer invitations to the unchurched. The *Promise for the Future* curriculum used this fall in POfP churches offers practical suggestions. Non-POfP churches are also encouraged to make use of these materials. [†]

1994 Crusader Program Update

PLANs are well underway for the 1994 Crusader Program!

Crusader Internship applications became available November 1 and will be available through December 15, 1993. All materials are due **before December 31, 1993**. Six prospective Interns have already requested applications, and several pastors have contacted us regarding working with an Intern next summer.

Young adults 20 years old and older are eligible to serve as Crusader Interns. But we would also be interested in talking with a very mature 19-year-old!

Summer Crusaders

We are currently planning to have two **Summer Crusader** teams of four to five members each plus a team leader. We will be recruiting team leaders with the

possibility of using interns in these positions. If not enough qualified persons apply, we will have only one team. All persons who apply will not necessarily be accepted.

Summer Crusaders will now be limited to a maximum of two years of team service. By so limiting the number of terms of service, we will be able to bring more young people into the program. It is our desire to encourage promising young people to move on into internships after team service.

We plan to add a week of inner city or short-term mission work (*if all of the details can be worked out!*) to provide a wider variety of service and experience within the term of service.

Summer Crusader applications will be available from December 1, 1993, through January 15, 1994. All materials are then due

before January 31, 1994. Youth from age 18 through 22 who will have graduated from high school before the term of service begins are eligible to serve as Summer Crusaders.

District Crusaders

We will have five districts participating in the **District Crusader** program this summer—Indiana, Central, Pennsylvania, Southeastern, and Ohio. District Crusader applications will be available February 1–15, with all materials to be returned **before February 28, 1994!**

For those interested in serving in any area of the Crusader Program, please request information or applications by writing to: **The Crusader Program, The Brethren Church, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805.** [†]

Announcing:



South of the Border

A Brethren-Sponsored, Short-Term Missions Opportunity

Three weeks of service at the Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Center in Juarez, Mexico, preceded by a weekend of training in Ashland.

Term of service: mid-June to early July.

Team size: two staff members and eight youth—a total of ten.

For: Christian young people who have completed their sophomore year in high school through those who are age 20.

Funding: Each team member will be required to raise his or her own funds (estimated amount, \$500).

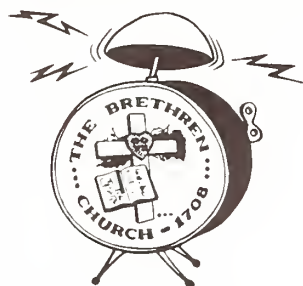
Ministry opportunities:

- Work projects
- Ministry with children
- Puppets
- Street evangelism
- Worship service

Be ready to have your faith challenged! This opportunity provides experience for those who have made a commitment to Christ and who have a passion for or are exploring missions.

More information will be mailed in January. If you have questions, call the Brethren Church National Offices at 419-289-1708.

Sponsored by the Leadership Development Commission, the University Church, Park Street Brethren Church, and the Missionary Board.



A "Wake-Up Call" Update

Ronald W. Waters, Treasurer and Director of Brethren Church Ministries, highlights the current financial situation of the National Office.

IN SEPTEMBER, I wrote an article about the financial challenge facing The Brethren Church National Office this year and next ("A Wake-Up Call!?" *September EVANGELIST*, pp. 22-23). As we approach the end of the fiscal year, it seems appropriate for me to provide you with an update.

A brighter picture

We have seen considerable improvement in the financial picture since early summer. In June it appeared that we would experience a loss for the year of more than \$40,000. Throughout the year, special efforts had been taken by your National Office staff to reduce expenses in an already tight financial budget. And churches and individuals had been asked to provide additional financial support to avert a year-end deficit.

It is impossible to predict what the results will be when December 31 rolls around. But the financial reports through October are encouraging. Fair Share Support for Brethren Church Ministries—the contributions Brethren churches make to support the ministries of the national office—are up nearly 11 percent over 1992 (all figures are year-to-date as of October 31). Total operating income is up 2.2 percent for the year.

"We have seen considerable improvement in the financial picture since early summer."

In addition to the increase in Fair Share Support, we received a special contribution from the National Brethren Youth in Christ (BYIC) of \$4,500 toward admini-

stration costs for youth ministry. Also, the General Conference offering was up 63 percent (\$6,944), and individuals have pledged and/or given more than \$2,000 toward the budget deficit.

At the same time, we have been successful in reducing expenses, which are down five percent from 1992. Savings have resulted from:

1. Reduction in staff travel to churches and district conferences.
2. Director of Brethren Church Ministries on one-quarter time salary since September 1 (due to study leave).
3. Elimination of one part-time position, that of Sherry Bowling as national Youth Ministry Associate.
4. Reduction in General Conference and BYIC Convention expenses through elimination of some program services.
5. Reducing the number of commissions from six to four a year ago.
6. Decrease in the number of ministries undertaken and reductions in some ongoing ministries.

The result is that as of October 31, 1993, we have reduced the operating deficit to \$2,240. The sale of assets (one-time income) has resulted in an overall surplus of \$7,578 (compared to a \$36,521 deficit at this time last year).

We're not out of the woods

While this is encouraging news, it does not mean we are "out of the woods." The 1993 budget is a bare-bones budget. Other than Passing On the Promise (which is a major investment in evangelism and outreach), we have added no new ministries this year. Where

possible, we have reduced support for some ministries. We are not advancing in our denominational ministry. At best, we are maintaining the status quo.

We do appreciate the financial support of many Brethren and their churches. And we are especially grateful for words of encouragement and for your prayers. Please continue to remember us in all these ways, for we are truly striving to serve Christ and the church.

Seven signs we're awake

And please remember the seven signs that we have answered the wake-up call, as I listed them in the September article:

1. Twenty-five additional churches budgeting full Fair Share Support for 1994.
2. Another twenty-five churches significantly increasing their percentage of Fair Share Support for 1994 (25-50 percentage points).
3. Two hundred Brethren families becoming Partners and Friends of Brethren Church Ministries.
4. Seventy-five percent of all churches not budgeting full Fair Share Support taking a "Have a Heart" offering in February.
5. Fifty Brethren adding The Brethren Church, Inc., to their wills during 1994.
6. Ten new churches providing THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST to all their members.
7. Brethren people giving \$40,000 in additional support for The Brethren Church, Inc., during 1994.

And thank you in advance for your special financial gift during the month of December. [†]



Williamstown First Brethren Church Holds One-Hundredth Anniversary Celebration

Williamstown, Ohio — The Williamstown First Brethren Church celebrated its 100th anniversary on Sunday, September 26.

Dr. Fred Finks, president of Ashland Theological Seminary, was the speaker for the Centennial Celebration morning worship service. Williamstown Pastor Gene Oburn, a student at Ashland Theological Seminary, led the service, and Moderator Willis Humphrey gave the welcome.

Special music included a piano prelude by Mrs. Polly Benschoff, wife of the late Rev. W. St. Clair Benschoff, a former pastor of the Williamstown Church; a solo by Pastor Oburn; a duet by Pastor Oburn and his wife DeAnn; selections by a quartet from Pleasant Hill, Ohio (Jerry and Lowell Schleinitz, Bob Falldorf, and Pastor Oburn [formerly from Pleasant Hill]); a song by the Oburn Quartet (Gene and DeAnn, Vanessa Oburn Gor-

don, and Tony Price—standing in for his fiancée, Geneva Oburn, who was sick); and a solo by Vanessa Gordon.

A carry-in fellowship meal followed the worship service. The meal was followed in turn by an afternoon program that included singing favorite hymns, a time of sharing, and a message by Dr. Charles Munson, professor emeritus of Ashland Theological Seminary and a former pastor of the congregation. Dr.

Munson looked into his crystal ball (an overturned fishbowl!) to see what was ahead for the Williamstown Church. Special music for this program included selections by the Pleasant Hill Quartet and a solo by DeAnn Oburn.

Attendance for the morning service was approximately 110, with a total of approximately 130 people attending one or more of the day's event. Several former pastors were among those present, including Dr. Munson, Rev. George Hagenbuch, Rev. Russell Gordon, and Dr. Dale Stoffer.

The Williamstown Church was begun in the early 1890s by a group of people interested in joining the "Progressive Brethren." Rev. A.J. Baughman organized the group and served as their pastor until 1902. In 1892 a four-week series of revival meetings was held with Rev. I.D. Bowman, a young minister from Philadelphia, serving as evangelist. According to a report of that event, great crowds attended these meetings, with even standing room being at a premium on many nights. The meetings resulted in 67 converts.

The congregation met in rented quarters for a time until the church building was completed in 1893. Thirty years later (in 1923) the building was remodeled and a basement was added. Other major improvements to the building over the years have included the addition of a fellowship hall in 1965, a pastor's study in 1980, and an access ramp for the physically impaired in 1982.

The current membership of the church is 40, and worship attendance averages around 35.



Williamstown Pastor Gene Oburn leads the congregation in singing during the Centennial Celebration worship service.

Photos by Ryan Gordon.

Johnstown Third Brethren Church Celebrates Seventieth Anniversary of Cornerstone Laying

Johnstown, Pa. — Members and friends of the Third Brethren Church of Johnstown enjoyed two days of special events September 18 and 19 to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of their present church building.

The kick-off event for the celebration was a Saturday afternoon reception. Members, former members, guests, and friends of the congregation enjoyed a time of becoming acquainted or getting reacquainted, of visiting with one another, and of viewing pictures, records, and other Third Brethren Church memorabilia that were on display.

Following the two-hour reception, the assembled crowd of approximately 200 gathered in the sanctuary for a concert featuring the keyboard music of organist Darlene Thomas and pianist Janet Pudliner of the Pleasant Hill Church of the Brethren and the vocal music of a male quartet known as The Joyful Noise (Harry Cooper, Glenn Benshoff, Tom Hindman, and Jerald Radcliff).

The evening culminated in a catered banquet, after which Rev. Jim Saunders, pastor of the Johnstown Third Church, led the assembled Brethren in singing favorite hymns and reminiscing about the wonderful history of the Third Brethren congregation. Among those reminiscing were the two remaining charter members of the church, Olive Howard and Ross Conner. Also featured were comments by former pastors Ronald Ritchey, Clarence Kindley, Duane Dickson, and Jerald Radcliff.

A two-hour worship service was the main event Sunday morning. It fea-

tured special music by an augmented choir of present choir members plus returning friends and past members, and inspiring messages by two sons of the congregation, Rev. Kenneth Howard



Part of the overflow crowd that attended the Johnstown Third Brethren Church 70th anniversary celebration.

and Rev. Glenn Grumbling. The service also included a welcome and thank-you's by church moderator James Rowser; special music by retired Third Brethren organist Elsie Ferg; and a song ("Jesus Loves Me") by the children of the congregation. In addition to challenging the Johnstown Third Brethren to look ahead to the future of their work for the Lord, Rev. Howard and Rev. Grumbling commented on all the nurture and inspiration they had received while growing up in the congregation.

The two-day time of celebration and

fellowship concluded with a covered-dish dinner following the worship service.

"Out of this celebration comes the knowledge that Third Brethren has served this community well over the past 70 years and [that] we still have much work to do here," commented Pastor Saunders. "It was a wonderful celebration, and we are looking forward for many more years on this corner, serving

our Lord Jesus Christ, but [also] serving our neighbors in this community. Pray for us as we pray for all of you, for it is only by the will of Almighty God that we are still here and it is only by His will that we will continue."

Serving on the planning committee for the 70th anniversary celebration were Ruth Shellhammer (chair), Floyd Benshoff, Jim Rowser, Dolores Golby, Bobbie Rudge, June Mitchell, Marion Benshoff, Jack Golby, Pat Pyne, and Pastor Saunders.

— reported by Pastor Jim Saunders

Vinco Church Members Protest Local Rental of X-Rated Videos

Mineral Point, Pa. — A sizable group from the Vinco Brethren Church joined a large group of concerned citizens at the October 29 meeting of the Jackson Township Supervisors to protest the rental of X-rated movies at a video store that opened recently near the church.

According to Rev. Jim Tomb, pastor of the Vinco congregation, the church's major complaint is that the video store is located across Route 271 from the church building. He added, however, that he and other members of the church don't feel that pornography is appropriate anywhere in the United States.

The owner of the video store characterized the business as a family-type operation that has all kinds of movies and video games for rent. But she was also quoted as saying that she estimates that on some days, 75 percent of the video rentals are X-rated movies.

After much discussion, the township supervisors decided that the store was acting legally. But the owner of the business agreed to meet with a committee from the congregation to see what could be done.

The supervisors meeting was covered by several television stations, and an article with a picture of Rev. Tomb appeared on the front page of the Johnstown newspaper, *The Tribune-Democrat*.

— reported by Ethel Cobaugh

Midwest Flood Victims Still Face Long Road to Recovery

Wheaton, Ill. — Despite waning media coverage, Midwest flood victims still face a long road to recovery, according to a news release from World Relief of the National Association of Evangelicals.

One of the greatest needs is for volunteers with skill in electrical, heating, plumbing, or drywall work to help with house repairs. Donations of building materials are also needed.

Financial contributions to assist with the flood recovery are welcomed as well. Gifts designated for Midwest flood relief may be given through your local church or sent directly to The Brethren Church, 524 College Ave., Ashland OH 44805.

Tucson First Brethren Church Getting Back on Its Feet After Difficult Period

Tucson, Ariz. — The Tucson First Brethren Church is getting back on its feet again following the unexpected death in May 1992 of the congregation's beloved pastor of nearly 30 years, Rev. Clarence Stogsdill.

For a time after Rev. Stogsdill's death, the congregation struggled along, filling the pulpit with special speakers from Sunday to Sunday. Then on December 1, 1992, Rev. Bill and Trudy Kerner arrived at the Tucson

Church, and things began to look up for the congregation. "Pastor Bill's sermons and his positive, cheerful attitude gave us a lift, and his words of encouragement spurred us to 'hang in there,'" wrote Janet Shank, corresponding secretary for the church. "[And] Trudy endeared herself to everyone [as well]," Mrs. Shank added.

During Rev. Kerner's six-month period as interim pastor, he and Trudy were visited by three of their four children. These were joyful occasions for the Tucson First Brethren congregation as well, for potlucks and fellowship times were held to welcome each of the visitors.

Among those who visited were Rev. David Kerner, his wife Diane, and their three children. This family ministered to the congregation on May 23, while on furlough from Brethren mission work in Colombia, South America.

After all these good times, it was with sadness that the congregation said good-bye to the Kerners at a farewell held June 6.

But this sadness was short-lived, for in August the Tucson Brethren had the joy of welcoming a new pastor into their midst. Following General Conference Rev. Bill and Lynne Brady and their family left Indiana, where Rev. Brady had pastored the Corinth Brethren Church, and journeyed to Arizona to minister to the Tucson Church. Once again this was an occasion for food and fellowship, as a wonderful carry-in dinner was held to welcome the Bradys to both the Tucson First Brethren Church and the Southwest District.

— reported by Janet Shank



A farewell cake expresses the congregation's thanks to Rev. Bill and Trudy Kerner.



The Brady family—Rev. Bill, Lynne, Bryan, and Billy (not in photo)—receive a warm welcome to Tucson.

Trinity Raising Seed Money For New Brethren Church

Canton, Ohio — If you were to attend an adult Sunday school class at the Trinity Brethren Church in Canton, Ohio, you might be surprised to see an offering being taken in a flowerpot.

The money being collected is for a special purpose—to pay for a demographic study of an area in north-central Ohio in which to plant a new Brethren church. The flowerpot seemed like an appropriate container in which to receive this offering, since it symbolizes raising seed money for future church growth.

The flowerpot being used to receive the offerings was specially decorated by Paula Steiner. Mrs. Steiner also designed a bulletin board showing a tree growing and putting out new shoots, representing what will happen as the Trinity Brethren give toward their goal.

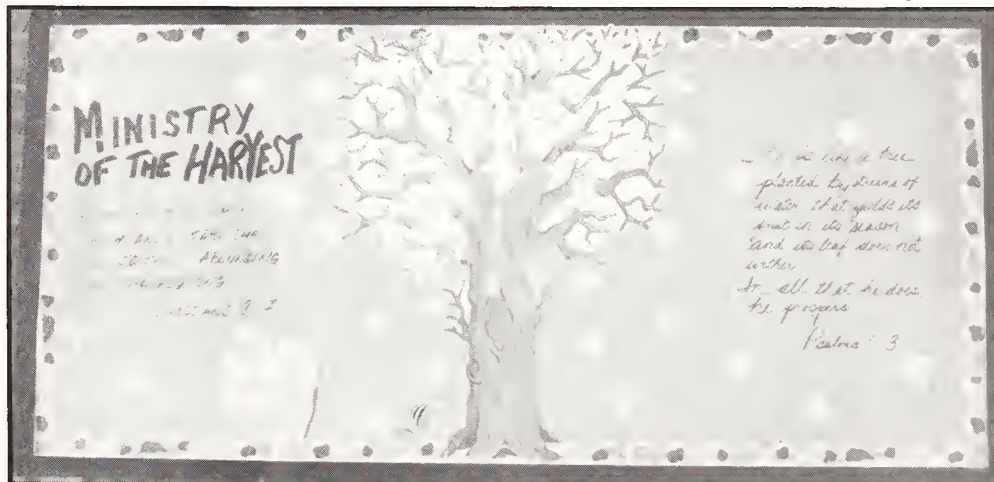
The Sunday school classes at Trinity

Church accepted the challenge to raise the money for the demographic study when they learned of plans to plant a new church somewhere in northern Ohio in 1994. The estimated cost of the study is around \$500.

The Trinity Brethren hope that other

churches in the Ohio district and throughout the entire Brethren denomination will adopt similar projects in order that church planting and home missions can go forward.

— reported by Carl Howenstine, Trinity member and Ohio District Mission Board president



Growth is the theme of this bulletin board by Paula Steiner.

Photo by J. Howard Mack.

Consultant Hired to Serve as Facilitator In Developing Denominational Planning

Ashland, Ohio — Norman Edwards of Seattle, Washington, has been hired by the Special Committee on Financial and Organizational Planning to serve as a facilitator in developing financial and organizational plans for The Brethren Church, as authorized by General Conference in August.*

Mr. Edwards is an independent consultant in fund-raising, organizational management, and marketing for Christian ministries. His background experience includes 17 years at Seattle Pacific University, the last six as vice president for development, and ten years at Wheaton College and the Billy Graham Center as vice president for advancement. He has served as a consultant for more than

**The action approved by Conference delegates was that "we authorize the moderator to appoint a committee . . . to hire and work with an outside facilitator to develop comprehensive strategies for long-range and short-range financial and organizational planning in The Brethren Church, based upon the priorities we have established for our ministries . . ."*

25 Christian organizations, including the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Free Methodist Church of North America, and the National Association of Evangelicals.

He worked with one denomination in which he spearheaded a survey of church leaders at every level to determine what services they valued at the denominational level and how willing they were to pay for those services. As a result of that study, he made numerous recommendations, many of which were adopted and some of which served as catalyst for further study. That church has since moved from a serious deficit position to a position where it is no longer borrowing for cash flow and its capital debt has been reduced by about one-third.

The Special Committee on Financial and Organizational Planning had its first meeting with Edwards on October 29. Then on November 12, several of the committee members met with him again to discuss how the denominational study would be conducted and to begin developing a survey that will be used in

that study. Edwards also spent part of the day in one-on-one conversations with several denominational executives.

Work continues on the survey, which is to be administered in January and early February. It will seek to determine how aware Brethren are of denominational services and programs, how much they value them, and how willing they are to support them. The survey will be given, using telephone interviews, to approximately 100 people (half pastors and half lay people).

After the survey has been taken, the committee will again meet with Edwards, as he begins working on a report of his findings. In addition to the survey results, Edwards will use other information and insights he gleans about the denomination in preparing his report. He will also confer with other consultants as he draws his conclusions. His completed report, including his recommendations, will be presented to the General Conference Executive Council at its March 18 meeting.

Members of the Committee on Financial and Organizational Planning are Rev. Ken Hunn (ch.), Mrs. Jeanette Sullivan, Dr. Arden Gilmer, Dr. Fred Burkey, and Rev. Gene Eckerley, with Mrs. Joan Ronk serving as recorder (without vote).

Golden Age Retreat Held For Seniors of N. Indiana

Shipshewana, Ind. — Thirty-one senior Brethren from northern Indiana gathered at the Brethren Retreat Center August 30 to September 2 for the annual Golden Age Retreat of Northern Indiana.

The retreat got underway Monday afternoon with a get-acquainted time led by Molly Cotter of the Retreat Center.

The main event for the evening was a memorial service conducted by Rev. Herbert Gilmer.

Tuesday morning started off with morning watch, lead by Verna Randall. Later, Rev. Jim

Black, executive director of the Missionary Board, presented an update on missions and told of his upcoming trip to India, Malaysia, and Korea. The group sent a generous offering for missions back to Ashland with him.

Much of the remainder of the day was spent enjoying indoor and outdoor games. Some from the group slipped into Shipshewana for the flea market. Evening events included a Bible quiz with Rev. Don Siders in charge, followed by campfire.



Photo session during the Northern Indiana Golden Age Retreat.

Morning worship led by Rev. Glenn Grumbling got Wednesday off to a good start. This was followed by a craft display by Mary Ellen Miller and others. The featured event for the afternoon was a croquet tournament, with other games for those not engaged in this competition. The day concluded with vespers led by Virgil Barnhart, followed on the lighter side with the annual amateur program.

Matilda Stout led the morning watch on Thursday. Breakfast was followed by a Bible study given by Rev. Duane Dickson. A business session, lunch, and a time of saying good-byes rounded out the retreat.

Thoughts on Christian Growth

By Joni Eareckson Tada

The branches of growing trees not only reach higher, but their roots grow deeper. It's impossible for a strong tree to have high branches without having deep roots. It would become top-heavy and topple over in the wind. The same is true with Christians. It's impossible to grow in the Lord without entwining our roots around His Word and deepening our life in His commands.

From Diamonds in the Dust (Zondervan Publishing House, 1993)



Little Crusader



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

Hi boys and girls!

If we were living many, many years ago during Bible times, we might have seen an article in the local newspaper like this one:

NEWS FLASH

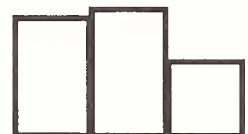
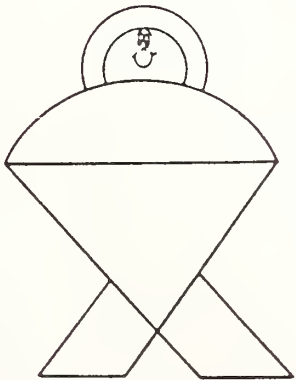
Bethlehem — Did you hear the good news? DID YOU HEAR THE GOOD NEWS? Jesus our Savior is born! He was born early in the morning on December 25th to Joseph of Nazareth and to Mary, his wife. Joseph and Mary had arrived in Bethlehem to register for the census of the entire Roman world. Because there was no room in the Bethlehem Inn, Mary gave birth to Jesus in an animal barn.

This news was reported to us by certain shepherds of Bethlehem. While out tending their sheep one evening, an angel of the Lord appeared to them and said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of Bethlehem, a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." After hearing this, they quickly went to town and saw Mary, Joseph, and the new baby Jesus.

This report is being sent everywhere. This miraculous birth of Jesus, the Savior, will go down in history.

This is the true meaning of Christmas!

Choose words from the box below to fill in the puzzle blocks to make a sentence that gives the true meaning of Christmas.



Savior
on
Christmas
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born



Pleasant View Church Burns Mortgage On Fellowship Center Built in 1988-89

Vandergrift, Pa. — The Pleasant View Brethren Church reached another milestone in its congregational life on Sunday, November 14, when it burned the mortgage it had taken out to build its Fellowship Center.

The Fellowship Center, a 60-by-60-foot multi-purpose, handicapped-accessible building, was dedicated in March 1989. It is used for Communion, baptisms, Sunday school classes, dinners, various meetings, parties, and other activities. The mortgage, taken out September 1, 1988, was for \$70,000. Total expenditure for construction of the building was approximately \$100,000. Most of the interior finishing work on the building was done by men, women, boys, and girls of the church.

Pastor R. Keith Hensley led the congregation in giving thanks to God for providing the funds to both start and



Moderator Jim McGraw (l.) and Trustee Chair Chuck McDevitt burn the mortgage for the Pleasant View Church's Fellowship Center.

complete this valuable asset of the church. He also led the congregation in rededicating the building to help reach the lost for the Lord. Moderator Jim McGraw and Trustee Chair Chuck McDevitt burned the mortgage.

Pleasant Hill Surprises Pastor At Annual Harvest Supper

Pleasant Hill, Ohio — The annual Harvest Supper of the Pleasant Hill First Brethren Church, held Sunday evening, November 7, had a surprise element this year.

Following the bountiful meal, Moderator Dave Shellenberger asked Pastor Bob Westfall to come forward. He then

presented Rev. Westfall a plaque in recognition of his ten years of service as pastor of the Pleasant Hill Church. Members of the congregation also surprised Rev. Westfall and his wife, Leesa, and their family with a shower of gifts, cards, and food items.

The annual Harvest Supper of the Pleasant Hill Church is a time of praise and thanksgiving to God for all His bounteous blessings.

— reported by Betty J. Shellenberger

Lawsuit Stops U.S. Funds From Being Used in China

Charlottesville, Va. — A U.S. Congressman and two citizens of the People's Republic of China filed a lawsuit in November to stop a U.S. federal agency from providing funds that are being used for population control measures in China.

The suit was filed against the U.S. Agency for International Development (US-A.I.D.) to prevent it from providing funding to the United Nations Population Fund.

"There is strong evidence that U.N. Population Fund assistance aids China's oppressive and brutal population control programs," said Craig Par-

shall, a Rutherford Institute attorney who is handling the case. For many years, Congress has forbidden U.S. money from going to any organization that supports, in any way, coerced abortions or sterilization in other countries. As a result, funding for the U.N. Population Fund had been stopped since 1985. The Clinton Administration, however, recently decided to release money to the fund.

In November the Justice Department, in response to the lawsuit, agreed to withhold \$20 million from the Population Fund until February 1, pending a court hearing on the matter.

"We are pleased that the Justice Department has agreed to temporarily halt the funding to the U.N. Population Fund, so that the Clinton Administration can

Passing On the Promise Showing Promising Results

Ashland, Ohio — Some great reports on Passing On the Promise are coming in, according to Ronald W. Waters, Director of Brethren Church Ministries, who serves as National Coordinator for the Passing On the Promise process.

In the western United States, Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson, Ariz., had about 75 people for its kick-off dinner, significantly more than the average attendance. The Mulvane, Kans., Brethren Church had 42 for its dinner and has a permanent POTP bulletin board. And the Northgate Brethren Church in Manteca, Calif., (one of the pilot churches) passed its three-year growth goal in its first year and is setting new goals.

In the Midwest, the Walcrest Brethren Church of Mansfield, Ohio, had high enthusiasm for its dinner and has at least two new families attending. The New Paris, Ind., First Brethren Church (also a pilot church) has received 14 new members in the past year. And at the Center Chapel Brethren Church near Peru, Ind., helping kick off the POTP process were two men dressed as street people with a sign saying, "Can you spare some change?"

Farther east, the Pleasant View Brethren Church of Vandergrift, Pa., has an "exceptional" self-study team, according to Pastor Keith Hensley, and good ideas are already being generated. The 340 Brethren Church near Elkton, Va., had 16 for its kick-off breakfast, which is about everybody in this fledgling congregation. The St. James, Md., Brethren Church will be using *Living Proof*, video-based, faith-sharing training in seven adult Sunday school classes beginning in January, with about 100 people expected to be in the classes.

rethink its position," said Parshall.

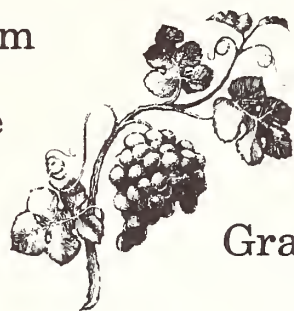
"The government of China has an oppressive policy of forced abortions and sterilizations. There are even instances of doctors, at the government's request, crushing the skulls of infants during birth. The U.S. funding of UNFPA clearly implicates the American people in these atrocities," Parshall said.

The Rutherford Institute is an international, nonprofit civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious liberty.

Do not become so busy celebrating Christmas that you have no time for Christ.
— Old Union Reminder

From

The



Grape
Vine

The Newark, Ohio, Brethren Church has been given a large commercial air conditioning unit by the Third Brethren Church of Johnstown, Pa. The unit is identical to one the Third Brethren Church uses to cool its building. The unit that is now at Newark was at one time used at the Sarver, Pa., Brethren Church.

Did you know that there is more than one BRETHREN EVANGELIST magazine? Brethren missionaries Prasanth and Nir-mala Kumar have for several years published a magazine called THE BRETHREN EVANGELIST. It is printed in the Telegu language (usually with one article or poem in English) for Brethren in India. And in October 1993, Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda began editing *El Evangelista Internacional* (The International Evangelist), a newsletter in Spanish for Spanish-speaking Brethren churches in the United States and Latin America.

Rev. Donald Rowser, evangelist and

In Gratitude

To Our Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

From the bottom of our hearts we wish to express our deepest gratitude to all who have cared for our family since the loss of Dustin on July 22. We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of love demonstrated to us through your prayers, cards, phone calls, visits, and financial gifts toward expenses.

We want to share with you that through your financial gifts and those of countless others in and around the St. Luke area, all of Dustin's medical expenses [in excess of \$30,000] have been met. God has so graciously worked a miracle in our midst.

We are beginning to work our way through the grief that surrounds us, and with your continued prayer support we may someday understand. God bless each and every one of you.

In Christian love and gratitude,
The Benshoffs
Dave, Dee, and Darin

chalk artist (and pastor of the Goshen, Ind., First Brethren Church), conducted revival services October 31–November 4 at the Huntington, Ind., First Brethren Church. Each evening he illustrated his Bible-based message with a chalk drawing that featured invisible chalk illuminated by black light. The pictures were given to the persons who brought the most guests to the services. In addition to Rev. Rowser's message, Jill and Kevin Van Duyne of the Roann, Ind., First Brethren Church presented a half hour of special music at each service.

Dr. G. William Benz, president of Ashland University, preached at the Sunday morning worship service on November 7 at the Linwood, Md., Brethren Church. Dr. Benz was in the area for the Greater Washington Area Ashland University Alumni Association meeting, which was held the previous evening.

In Memory

Dr. Leslie E. (Doc) Lindower, 89, a former Brethren pastor and retired dean of Ashland College, died October 29. Dr. Lindower was associated with the faculty of Ashland College and Seminary for more than 35 years and served as dean of the college for 20 years until his retirement in 1974.



He was born December 16, 1903, in Stark County, Ohio, the son of Frank B. and Pearl Schrantz Lindower. A 1921 graduate of McKinley High School, he received a bachelor of arts degree from Ashland College in 1926; a bachelor of theology degree from Ashland Seminary in 1928; and a doctor of theology degree in 1932 from Dallas Seminary. In 1987 he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by Ashland College.

He served churches in West Virginia, Indiana, and Ohio. In 1937 he accepted a position as professor at Ashland Theological Seminary, thus beginning his long association with the seminary and college. Following his retirement from the college, he served 17 years as chaplain for residents at Brethren Care, an Ashland nursing home.

He was also active at the Park Street Brethren Church in Ashland, having served the congregation as moderator, trustee, and Sunday school teacher. He also served The Brethren Church as General Conference moderator.

He was married August 16, 1925, to Ida G. Oliver, who survives. They were the parents of three children, Mrs. Phil (Jean) Lersch of Brethren House Ministries, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Mrs. Lonnie (Ann) Eagle of Galion, Ohio; and Dr. John Lindower of Kettering, Ohio. There are also

Thirty-five people from Northwest Brethren Chapel in Tucson, Ariz., served 461 meals at the Gospel Rescue Mission on the day before Thanksgiving. They also passed out Spanish and English New Testaments (provided by the mission) to those at the meal.

Dr. and Mrs. Harold Barnett were honored at a surprise party September 11 in celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary and the 40th anniversary of Dr. Barnett's ordination. A number of Brethren members and pastors attended the party, which was held at the Mathias Church of the Brethren, where Dr. Barnett now serves. During his 40 years of ministry, Dr. Barnett pastored Brethren churches in Mansfield, Ohio; Johnstown, Pa.; Lost Creek, Rowdy, and Haddix, Ky.; and Hagerstown, Md. He was also president of Riverside Christian Training School in Lost Creek, Ky.

eight grandchildren (including Brethren missionary Tim Eagle) and ten great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at Park Street Brethren Church on November 2 with Pastor Arden Gilmer presiding, assisted by Dr. Virgil Ingraham, with comments by Dr. Lindower's son-in-law, Rev. Phil Lersch.

Jerry J. Bargerhuff, 54, October 23. Member and deacon of the Mexico, Ind., First Brethren Church, where he had also served as a trustee. He was a former member of the Flora Brethren's Home Board and a former Gideon. Services by Pastor Bob Dixon, Rev. Bill Cook, and Rev. John Bartholomew.

Glade E. Miller, 88, October 23. Member for 75 years and deacon of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church, where he also taught Sunday school and held many church offices. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters

Bertha A. Wyatt, 86, October 21. Longtime member of the Ardmore First Brethren Church, where she had served as church secretary, president of the Abigail W.M.S., Sunday school secretary for many years, and on various ministries and committees. Services by Pastor William Shipman.

Gwendolyn Sorenson, 79, September 28. Member of the Lanark First Brethren Church. Services by Pastor Jim Garrett.

Francis Fox, 67, September 9. Member for 24 years of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church, where he taught Sunday school and served as president of the Laymen's Organization. Services by Pastor Ronald L. Waters.

Lelia Mae Ru Lon, 85, July 9. Member of the Waterloo Hammond Avenue Brethren Church. Services by Rev. Richard C. Witmer. She was the mother of Brethren Elder Dale P. Ru Lon.

Membership Growth

Flora: 4 by baptism

Vinco: 7 by baptism

Gratis: 8 by transfer

Lanark: 3 by baptism

Linwood: 3 by baptism

Mt. Olive: 5 by baptism

White Gift Offering

Christian Education Offering

Brethren Church Ministries Offering



The name of the December offering emphasis has changed through the years. But one thing has not changed — our commitment to extending the ministry of the local church through denominational ministries!

There are many ministries that would be impossible to accomplish (or at least very difficult) by one or even a few local churches. But there is strength in numbers.

The General Conference Executive Council (GCEC) and The Brethren Church National Office staff are committed to advancing the cause of Christ through Brethren Church denominational ministries. But that is possible only through the faithful and generous support of Brethren people like yourself.

Thank you for your partnership through your prayers and your financial support this month.

Send your gift to:

**The Brethren Church
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805**

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